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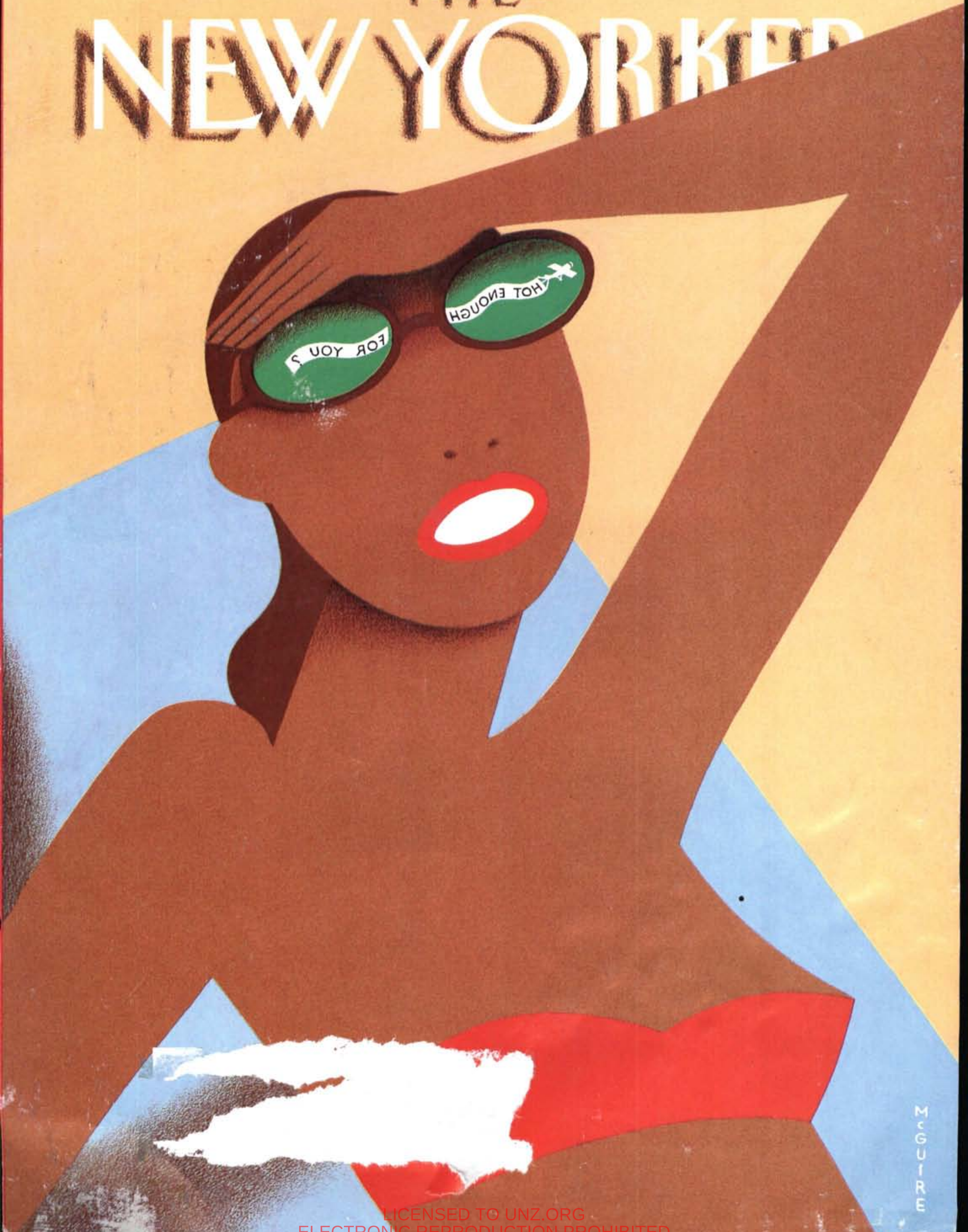
THE NEW YORKER

July 26, 1999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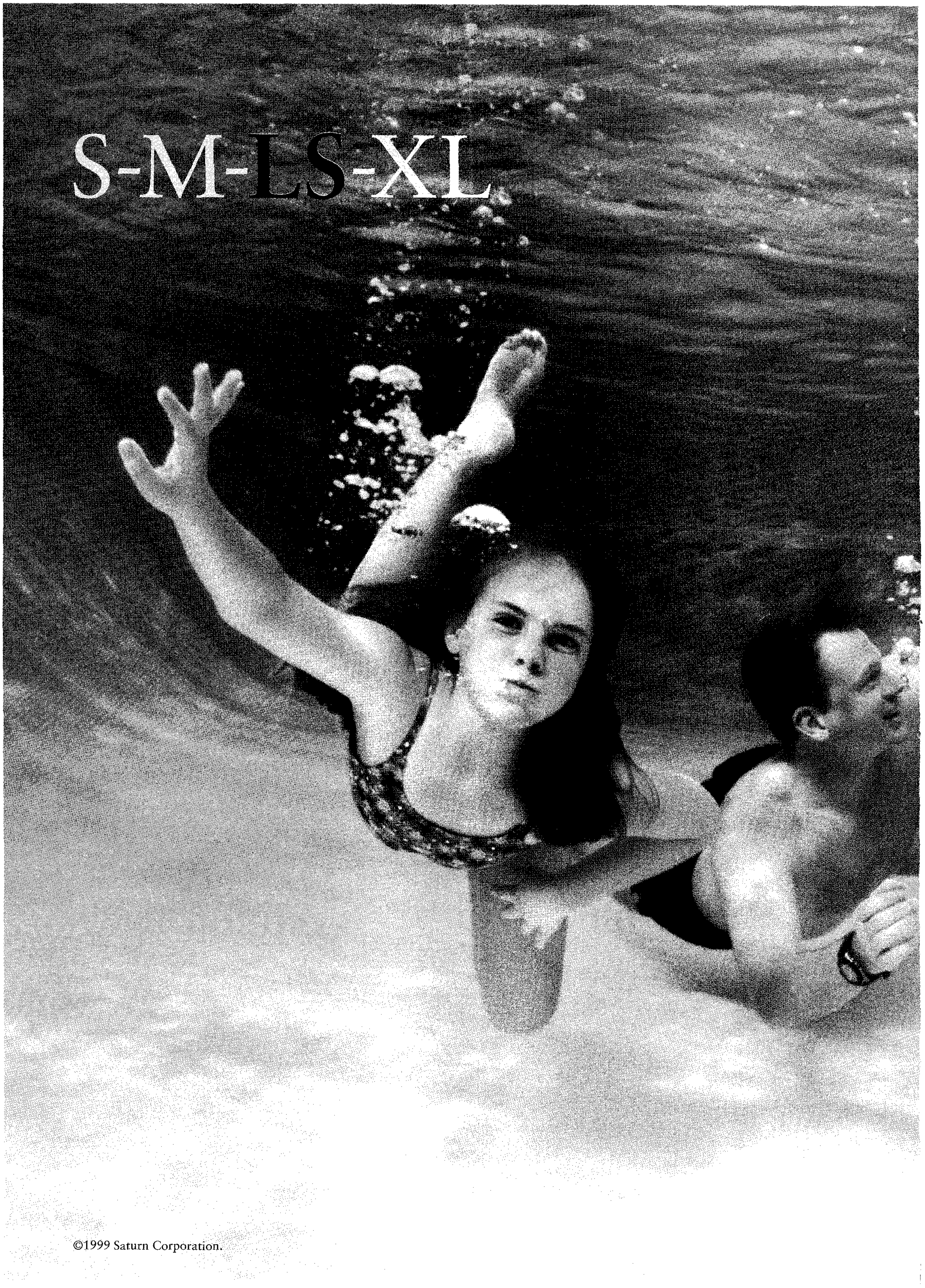

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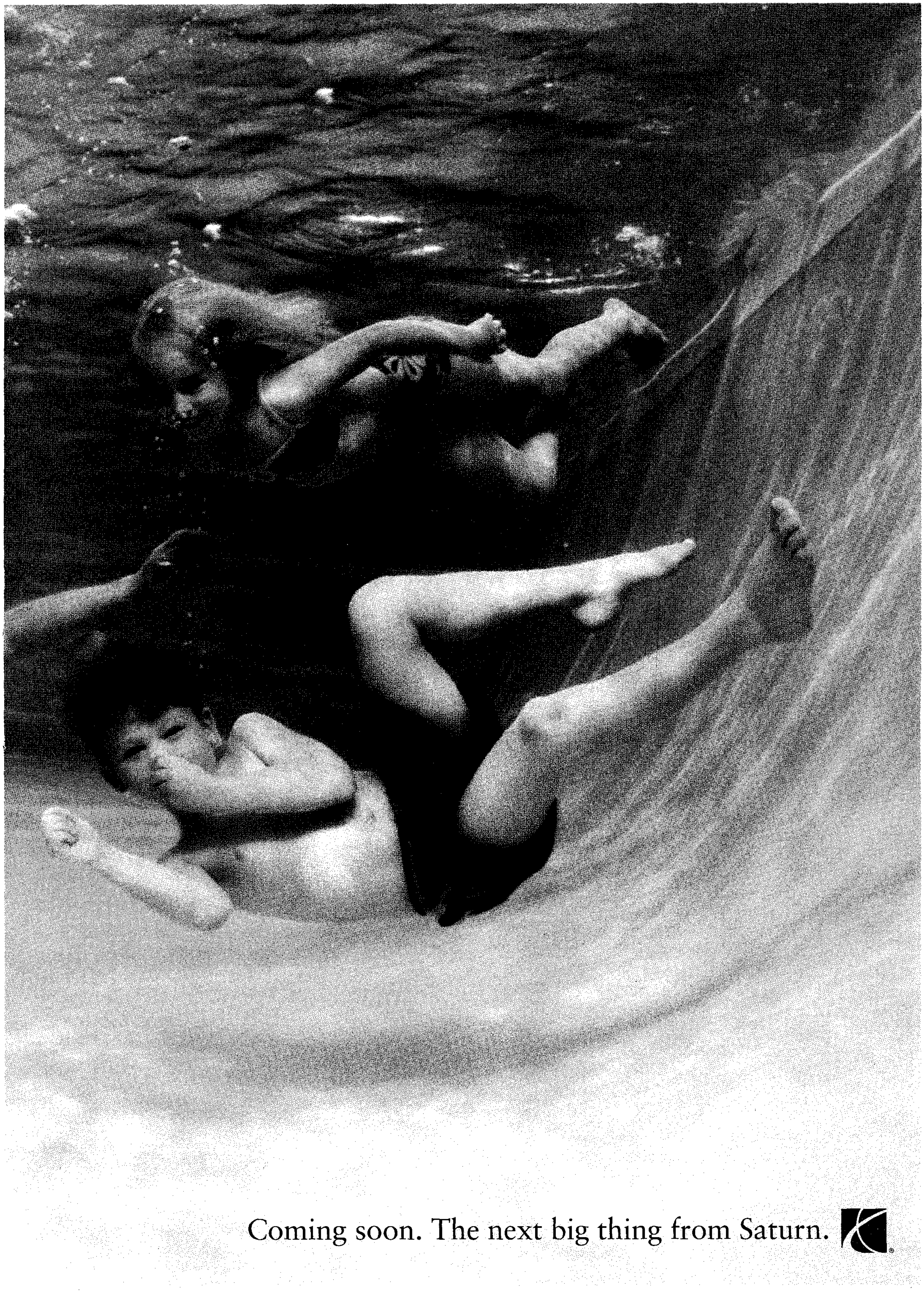

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THE NEW YORKER (ISSN 0028-792X), published weekly (except for six combined issues: Feb. 22 & Mar. 1, Apr. 26 & May 3, June 21 & 28, Aug. 23 & 30, Oct. 18 & 25, Dec. 27 & Jan. 3) by The Condé Nast Publications Inc., 20 W. 43rd St., N.Y., N.Y. 10036. Vol. LXXV, No. 20, July 26, 1999. Periodical postage paid at New York, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. Authorized as second-class mail by the Post Office Department, Ottawa, Canada, and for payment of postage in cash. Canadian Publication Mail Sales Product Agreement No. 190969. Canadian goods-and-services-tax registration number R123242885. Registered as a newspaper at the British Post Office. Subscription rates: In U.S. and possessions, one year, $42.00; two years, $72.00. In Canada, one year, $90.00 (includes GST and HST where applicable). In Germany, one year, DM290. Mail orders to: IP Internationale Presse, Distribution & Marketing GmbH, Waldstr. 70, D-63128 Dietzenbach, Germany. Other foreign subscriptions, one year, $112.00, payable in advance.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The New Yorker, Box 56447, Boulder, CO 80328-6447. PRINTED IN U.S.A.

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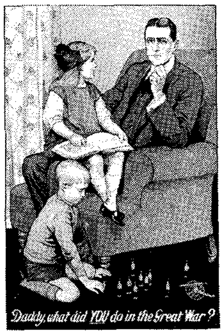
Daddy, what did YOU do in the Great War?

Saville Lumley, London, circa 1918.

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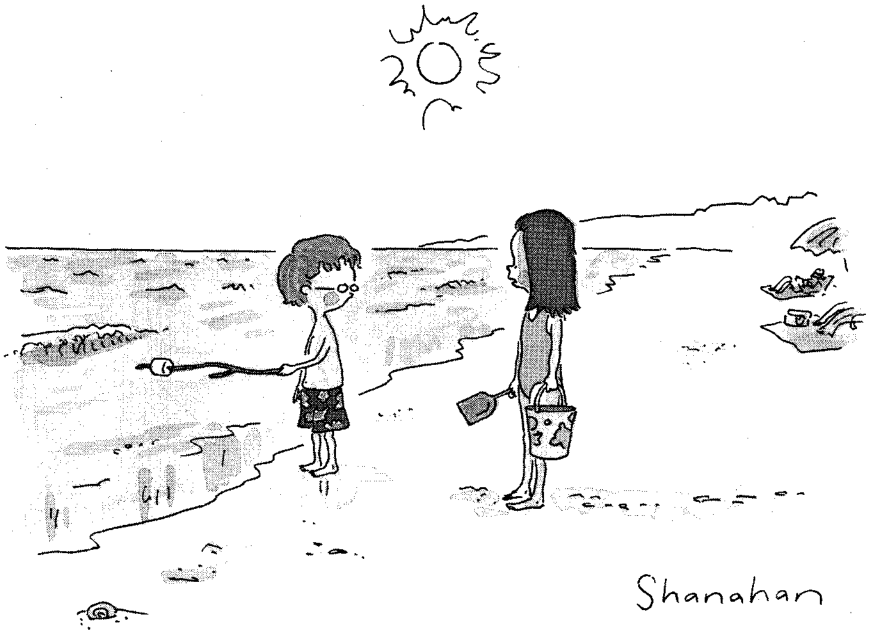

"First beach?"

THE NEW YORKER, 20 WEST 43RD STREET, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10036. David Carey, publisher; David L. Kahn, associate publisher, David M. May, associate publisher/Europe; Joyce Castleberry, New York manager; Cristina Vittoria, advertising manager; Susan Harrington, director of creative services; James Oates, director of marketing and planning; Theresa Gaffney, director of promotion. For advertising inquiries, please call David L. Kahn at (212) 536-5400. THE NEW YORKER is not responsible for the return or loss of submissions, or for any damage or other injury to unsolicited manuscripts or artwork. Any submission of a manuscript or artwork must be accompanied by a self-addressed envelope of appropriate size, bearing adequate return postage. The magazine does not consider unsolicited photographs or transparencies. © 1999 by The Condé Nast Publications Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this periodical may be reproduced without the consent of THE NEW YORKER. The periodical's name and logo, and the various titles and headings herein, are trademarks of Advance Magazine Publishers Inc., published through its division The Condé Nast Publications Inc. S. I. Newhouse, Jr., chairman; Steven T. Florio, president and C.E.O.; Charles H. Townsend, executive vice-president; Catherine Viscardi Johnston, executive vice-president; Eric C. Anderson, executive vice-president/chief financial officer.

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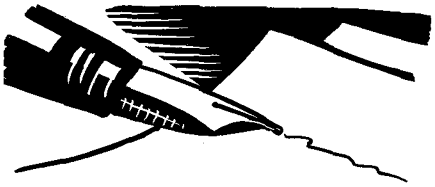

D.I.Y. FEMINISM

In reviewing Judith Hennessee's biography of Betty Friedan (Books, June 14th), Daphne Merkin offered a cogent explanation for the reluctance of many young women to identify themselves with the women's movement. I have great respect for early feminists, like Friedan, who, by focussing first and foremost on their own lives, inspired millions of women to change theirs. Unfortunately, as Merkin writes, "there is yet to be a political or social movement that can accommodate the vagaries of personal fulfillment, which are always idiosyncratic and unheeding of the party line." I have decided that I am a "Merkin feminist," a member of an inchoate movement whose slogan will be "What do women want? Ask them one at a time."

ALANA NEWHOUSE
New York City

TOUGH LOVE?

Will Joe Klein's love affair with George W. Bush's message of "compassionate conservatism" (The Talk of the Town, July 5th) end when Klein looks more closely at Bush's record? Bush wants to offer "practical help to women and children in crisis." Here are two recent examples of "help": Bush, who has made education his initiative, nonetheless supported tax cuts over increases in kindergarten funding—even though nearly a quarter of kindergarten-age children in Texas either do not attend school at all or are only able to attend half-days. And, while Texas has the nation's second-highest number of children without health insurance, Bush attempted to reduce the number of children eligible for the State Children's Health Insurance Program by two hundred thousand, by setting draconian eligibility standards (if he succeeded, only five states would have had stricter standards). When Klein asks, "It couldn't also be that he actually cares. Could it?," the answer is "No."

NATHANIEL NORTON
Weslaco, Tex.

A BARTENDER'S BERLIN

I suppose it's possible that, as Jane Kramer's Letter from Europe (July 5th) suggests, thousands of Berliners wake up every morning filled with angst about, for instance, whether the design of the DaimlerChrysler complex will serve to "link the city to itself." But more typical, I suspect, is the bartender with whom I fell into a pleasant conversation one day this spring at a sidewalk café not far from Unter den Linden. I asked him if he believed that the Reichstag's new glass dome would help to exorcise the demons of Berlin's dark past while providing, for all Germans, a morally unambiguous perspective on the present. "There are two possibilities," he replied after giving the matter some thought. "Either you spend too much time reading the newspapers or you are pulling my leg."

HERB MERITT
New Providence, N.J.

COVERING POLITICS

The July 19th cover, by Harry Bliss, depicting a thuglike Rudolph Giuliani about to mug an innocent Hillary Clinton in Central Park, is an example of the kind of infantile leftism that has long damaged the cause of progressive politics. A more appropriate satire of the Mayor would be to portray him as the Emperor Napoleon, after the David portrait, with Hillary, bare-breasted, holding up the flag in the manner of Delacroix. Whatever one thinks of Giuliani, he has reduced the crime rate. Give us a break.

RICHARD CUMMINGS
Bridgehampton, N.Y.

Mr. Bliss's drawing depicts with laser accuracy the Mayor vs. First Lady race for the Senate. As with "The Picture of Dorian Gray," it reveals the soul and character beneath the skin. Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts and souls of men? Harry Bliss knows.

EVELYN MAYER
Riverdale, N.Y.

•

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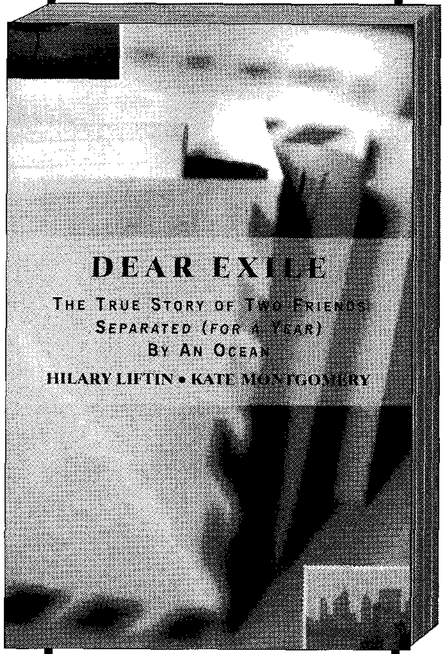
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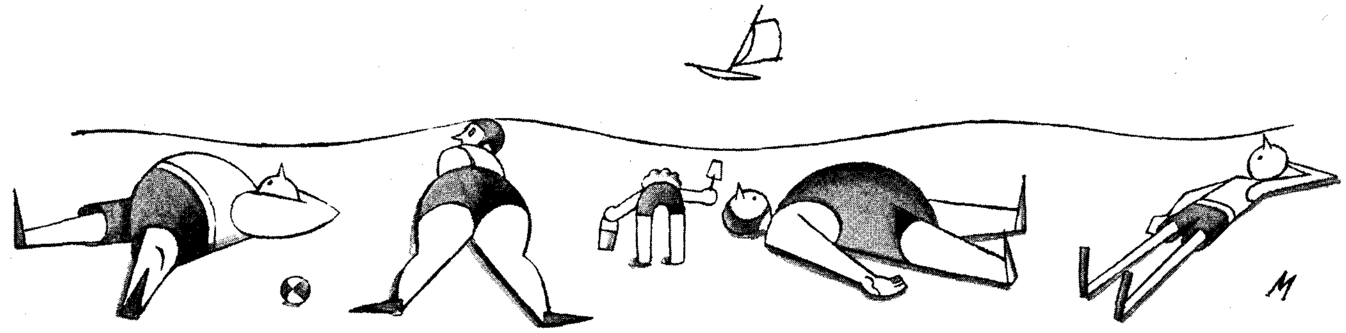

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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THE THEATRE

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.)

Dear Liar—Marian Seldes and Donal Donnelly portray Mrs. Patrick Campbell and George Bernard Shaw, in a drama that Jerome Kilty based on letters written during the forty-year clandestine love affair between the actress and the playwright. Preview on July 21. Opens July 22 at 7. (Irish Repertory Theatre, 132 W. 22nd St. 727-2737.)

A Good Swift Kick—A comic revue of twenty-odd songs by John Forster, on such topics as Thomas Jefferson's DNA and cultural imperialism. In previews. (Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 14th St. 239-6200.)

OPENED RECENTLY

After the Fair—The York Theatre Company presents a musical based on the Thomas Hardy story "On the Western Circuit," with book and lyrics by Stephen Cole and music by Matthew Ward. (Theatre at St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. 239-6200.)

Annie Get Your Gun—A terrific revival of Irving Berlin's solid-gold score. It's played for romance and sass, which the vulnerable and charming Bernadette Peters and the hunky, easygoing Tom Wopat deliver in spades. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

Automatic Earth—From 3-Legged Dog, a multimedia work written by Kevin Cunningham, in which a man with a brain injury explores the American landscape as a hurricane heads his way. (Signature Theatre, 555 W. 42nd St. 645-0374. Closes Aug. 1.)

Bash—Neil LaBute's three beautifully written, cunningly constructed monologues pack a fierce punch, rivalling the work of O'Neill in their unswerving gaze on dark truths. The excellent cast (Calista Flockhart, Ron Eldard, and Paul Rudd) is put through the wringer under the slick direction of Joe Mantello, in an extraordinary evening of trenchant theatre. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-6200. Closes July 24.)

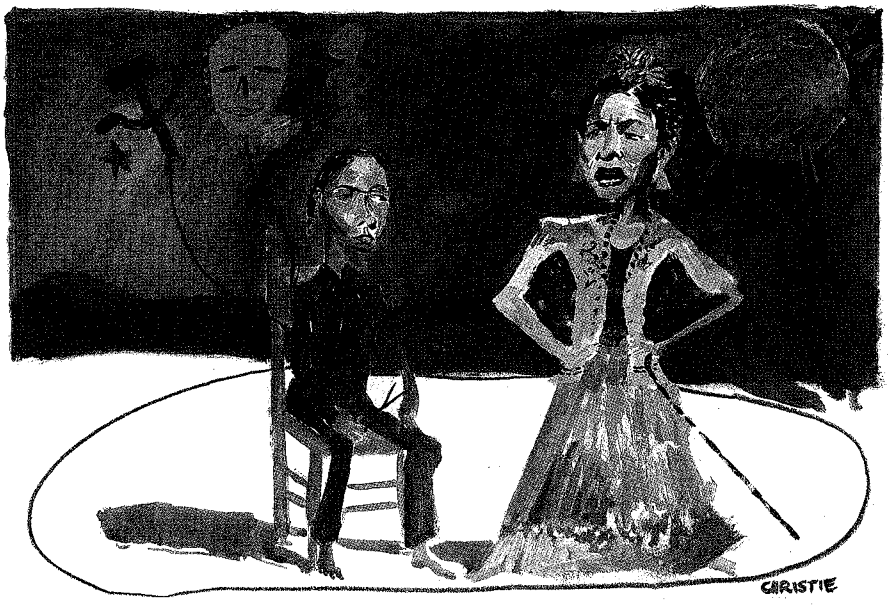
Benten Kozo—Traditional Kabuki meets Jackie Chan in a terrific evening concocted by director Jim Simpson and his Bat Theatre Company. The company's hip updating of the nineteenth-century script, along with Moe Schell's clever costumes, creates an ironic, funny, energetic production that (like many of the company's offerings in the past year) is well worth a trek to Tribeca. The show runs in repertory with Erin Courtney's dark comedy, "Mother's Couch," which is performed Fridays and Saturdays at 11 P.M. (Flea Theatre, 41 White St. 226-0051. Closes Aug. 8.)

Brian Friel Festival—July 22-24 at 8 and July 25 at 3: Final performances of the Irish playwright's drama "The Aristocrats," performed by the Gate Theatre. (LaGuardia Drama Theatre, Amsterdam Ave. at 65th St. For information about tickets, call 875-5030.)

Closer—Patrick Marber's slick dissection of the anatomy of desire follows four characters as they meet, mate, and move on in a kind of algebra of solitude which is factored out before our eyes. Marber can be very funny, and his writing is tight and well paced, but his staging is not. (Reviewed in our issue of 4/5/99.) (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Death of a Salesman—The casting of this production of Arthur Miller's masterpiece is generally uneven, but the show still packs a wallop. (3/8/99) (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 239-6200.)

Emerging Artist Series—The final production in a new Performing Garage festival is "A History of Heen (Not Francis E. Dec, Esq.)," a work that examines technology's impact on society. Written and performed by Eric Dyer, Scott Gillette, and Maggie Hoffman. July 22-25 at 8. (33 Wooster St. 966-3651.)



Anilú Pardo and Priscilla López, in "Goodbye, My Friduchita."

GREGORY CHRISTIE

The Gathering—A Shabbat dinner set during the spring of Reagan's controversial visit to Bitburg (the German cemetery where, it is believed, Nazi soldiers are buried) turns into political crossfire between a man (Robert Fass) who writes speeches for the President and his father (Theodore Bikel), who survived Dachau. It could have been a sombre, if not overly burdened, affair, but when Jesse Adam Eisenberg, who plays a precocious pre-teen about to be bar mitzvahed, skids onto the stage his comic, sputtering energy ricochets off his grandfather's august cynicism and sets the tone of the tightly scripted first act. The mood slows to a more ponderous pace in the second. (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 239-6200.)

Goodbye, My Friduchita—With the help of some heavy eyebrow pencil, Priscilla López bears an uncanny physical resemblance to the Mexican Surrealist painter Frida Kahlo, and she convincingly captures the artist's fiery spirit. Anilú Pardo, a Mexican actress and choreographer, is also riveting, as the young Frida, who engages her older self in a kind of dialogue out of time. It's a visually electric portrait, enhanced by thumping choreography and massive slides of Kahlo's art, but there's a little too much Frida onstage; it's a pity that the artist Diego Rivera, Kahlo's husband and lifelong obsession, never drops by to give his version of certain anecdotes, which, told entirely from Kahlo's point of view, seem rather one-sided. Written by Dolores C. Sendler. (The Directors Company, 311 W. 43rd St. 712-7458.)

Hurrah at Last—The main character of Richard Greenberg's latest play is a whiny, money-obsessed novelist called Laurie (Peter Frechette), and he is clever (has Greenberg ever created a main character who is not?) without being compelling. It doesn't help matters that he has a bad cold and is stuck in a hospital bed during most of the second act; his fevered perceptions are rarely revelatory. Directed by David Warren. Reg Rogers takes over for Mr. Frechette beginning July 27. (6/14/99) (Gramercy Theatre, 127 E. 23rd St. 719-1300.)

Ice Factory Festival—SoHo Think Tank's summer shindig highlighting new works continues with "West Pier," by the French play-

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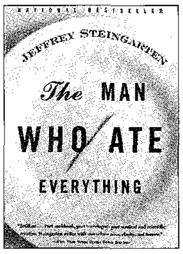
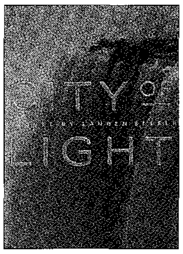
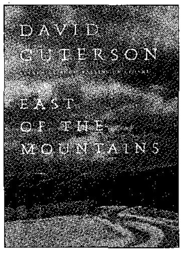


The Man Who Ate Everything, *by Jeffrey Steingarten* This writer's passionate search for culinary perfection is borderline obsessive, but his boundless curiosity makes this book both entertaining and informative. Retail, $14.95. bn.com price, $11.96.



City of Light, *by Lauren Belfer* This vividly detailed debut novel focuses on American life in Buffalo, New York, just after the turn-of-the century. Its unforgettable protagonist is a never-married headmistress. Retail, $24.95. bn.com price, $17.46.



East of the Mountains, *by David Guterson* The acclaimed author of *Snow Falling on Cedars* spins an eloquent tale about a doctor's quest to understand life and death when faced with his own mortality. Retail, $25.00. bn.com price, $17.50.

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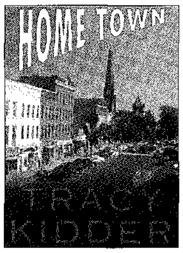
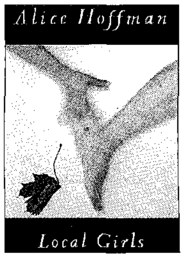
Bella Tuscany, *by Frances Mayes* Ten years after she first purchased her Tuscan home, the author still rejoices in her love of the Italian countryside. A book filled with sensual discovery and luminous, descriptive passages. Retail, $25.00. bn.com price, $17.50.



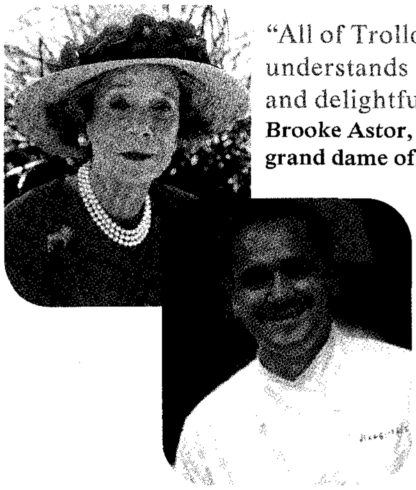
Home Town, *by Tracy Kidder* Set in Northampton, Massachusetts, Pulitzer Prize-winner Kidder uncovers the many layers of a town rich in literary history. A bevy of earnest, endearing characters make this a sweetly compelling tale. Retail, $25.95. bn.com price, $18.17.



Local Girls, *by Alice Hoffman* This collection of beautifully told stories follows Gretel Samuelson, a young girl growing up on Long Island, as she navigates love and loss. Retail, $22.95. bn.com price, $16.06.

book(re)marks

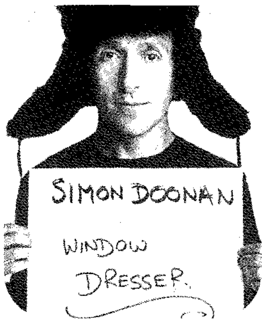
"What is your favorite book of all time and why?"



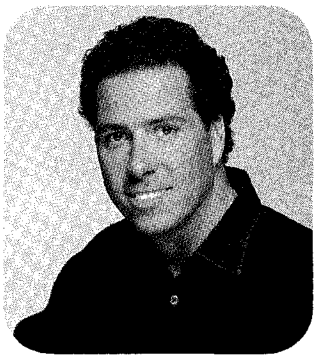
"All of Trollope. Because he understands people so entirely and delightfully."
Brooke Astor,
grand dame of philanthropy

"*The Guide to Practical Gastronomy*, by Ali Baba, is the encyclopedia of great cuisine. I use it all the time for reference and inspiration."
Jean-Georges Vongerichten,
culinary sensation

"*The Arrangement*, by Elia Kazan, is about someone who completely changes his life in his forties, which is very exciting and makes for a fascinating read."
Ellen Von Unwerth,
fashion photographer



"*Vamps and Tramps*, by Camille Paglia. She looks like she is about to do a kung fu move on the cover. It has incredible range—Alice in Wonderland meets Susan Sontag."
Simon Doonan,
Creative Director, Barneys New York



"My book, *Extraordinary Furniture*, was influenced by Thomas Chippendale's *Gentleman and Cabinet Maker's Director* of 1754. The book was sold to noblemen, who in turn had local cabinet makers create the designs. Chippendale was the first furniture entrepreneur."
Viscount David Linley,
royal woodworker

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Photos: Brooke Astor by Anders Overgaard. Self-portrait by Ellen von Unwerth. Simon Doonan by Steven Meisel and Penguin Studio/Callaway.

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one and a half hour swedish massage: $125

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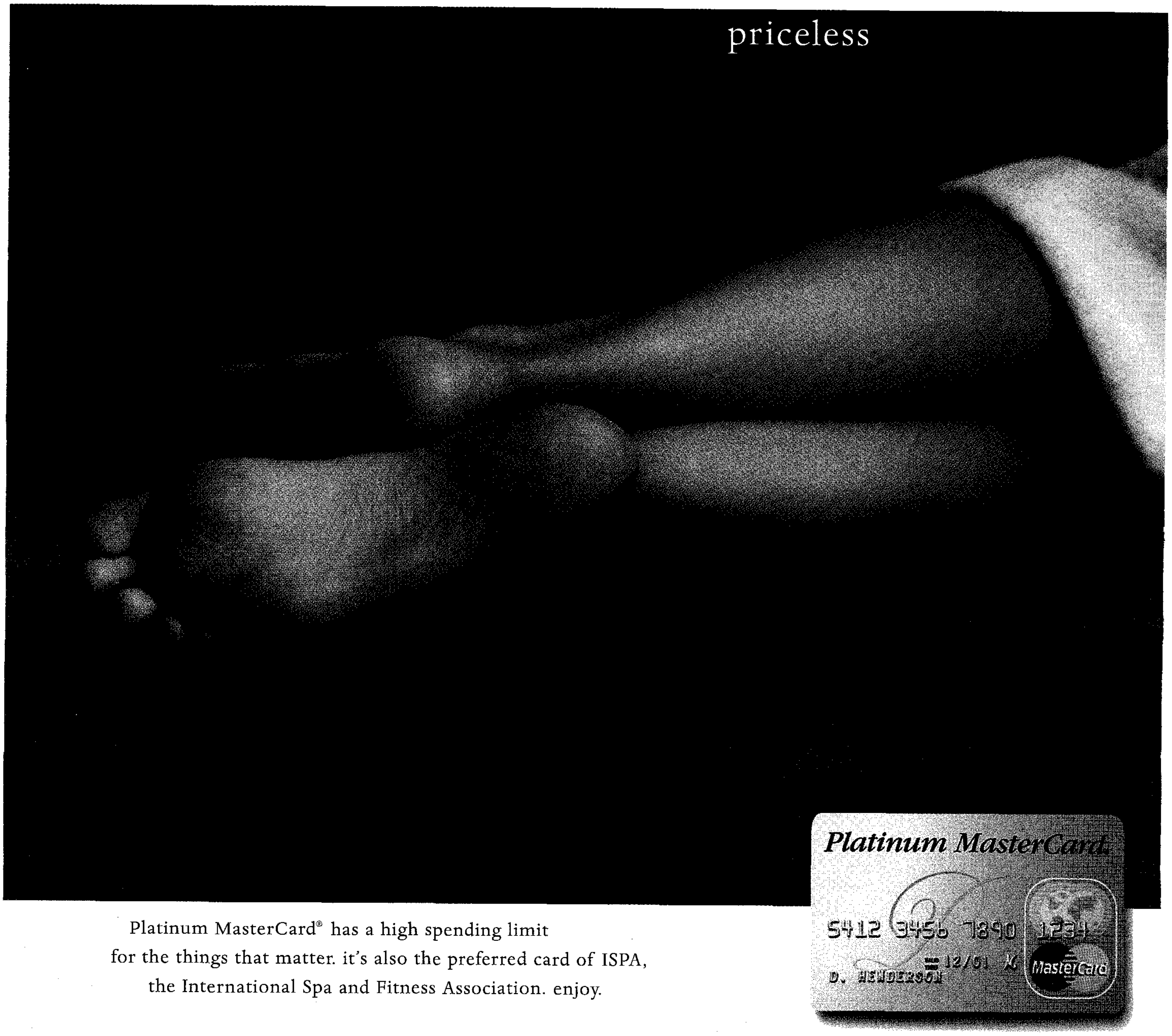
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wright Bernard-Marie Koltès. July 21-24 at 7. The festival continues through Aug. 14. (Ohio Theatre, 66 Wooster St. 966-4844.)

If Love Were All—Twiggy and Harry Groener star as Gertrude Lawrence and Noël Coward, in this appealing revue-cum-reminiscence by Sheridan Morley; the pair sing some twenty Coward songs and portray, with sweetness and without sentimentality, the remarkable lifelong friendship between the two, who met when Noël was twelve and Gertie fourteen. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 239-6200.)

I'm the One That I Want—The comedian Margaret Cho tells the story of her disastrous descent into Hollywood, as the first Asian-American to have her own sitcom. (Westbeth Theatre Center, 151 Bank St. 307-4100. Closes Aug. 14.)

In Dahomey—Shirley Verrett stars in the 1903 musical by Will Marion Cook and Will Vodery, one of the first Broadway shows written and produced by black artists. (Henry Street Settlement, 466 Grand St. 353-1176. Closes July 25.)

It Ain't Nothin' But the Blues—A marvellous collection of songs performed by a dynamic cast. The music alone could have showcased the influence of the blues, but instead the audience is subjected to explanatory notes and bad-talk-show banter. Fortunately, the blues triumphantly survives even this. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

The Joy Luck Club—Susan Kim's adaptation of the Amy Tan novel, staged by the Pan Asian Rep. (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 239-6200.)

Macbeth—The Classical Theatre of Harlem's version, performed outdoors. (Harlem School of the Arts Courtyard, St. Nicholas Ave. at 141st St. 539-8828. Closes Aug. 1.)

A Midsummer Night's Dream—The Shakespeare Project's rambunctious production, playing in parks around the city, makes for a delightful summer evening. In a neat conceptual twist, the fairies are puppets (created by Ralph Lee, of the Village Halloween Parade) manipulated by the actors; the technical strains of acting while puppeteering do show at times, and the cast is mixed, but it's hard to quibble in the face of so much fun. (For information about dates and locations, call 946-1869. Closes Aug. 15.)

Peter Pan—The former Olympic gymnast Cathy Rigby stars in a limited engagement of the 1954 musical. (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 307-4100.)

Richard III—Shakespeare in the Park(ing Lot), from Expanded Arts. (Municipal Parking Lot at Broome and Ludlow Sts. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 253-1813. Closes Aug. 7.)

Small Craft Warnings—David Greenspan leads the cast of the Worth Street Theatre's production of Tennessee Williams's 1972 drama. (Tribeca Playhouse, 111 Reade St., at West Broadway. 604-4195. Closes July 26.)

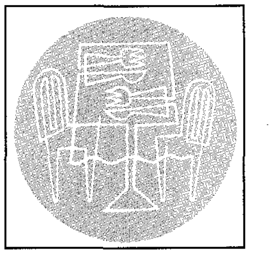
Snakebit—Two guys, a gal, and an AIDS test. With all the one-liners and dialogue cued by contemporary culture, this comedy-drama by the actor and first-time playwright David Marshall Grant, like a lot of new plays, seems like a sitcom rewritten for the stage (fewer jokes, more "issues"). (Century Theatre, 111 E. 15th St. 239-6200.)

Things You Shouldn't Say Past Midnight—Peter Ackerman's screwball bedroom comedy consists mainly of a sublimely ridiculous conference call involving three pairs of lovers. The questions about sex and the proper balance between intellectual and physical attraction have no answers, but Ackerman has some interesting suggestions, and, to his credit, comedy outweighs the theorizing. John Rando, the director, has a good eye, and the show comes off beautifully. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)

This Lime Tree Bower—A delightful tale (by Conor McPherson, who also wrote "The Weir") of three young Irishmen, each of whom goes off the rails in various ways but, with a little help from the other two, is able to put his life back together again. Neatly told as a series of overlapping monologues, the play is funny and sharply observed, and sweet without being sentimental. A perfect antithesis to this season's blockbusters. (Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. 333-4052.)

Thwak—Comic acrobatics (both physical and vocal) from the Australian performers David Collins and Shane Dundas, a.k.a. the Umbilical Brothers. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 307-4100.)

TABLES FOR TWO



The Victory, 71 Hoyt St., at State St., Brooklyn (718-596-9035)—From the four sidewalk tables at this tiny three-month-old corner café, one can survey the dark, Hopperesque vista of downtown Brooklyn while savoring lavish Continental pastries and various caffeine concoctions. The juxtaposition provides a nice introduction to the charms of Boerum Hill, where antebellum brownstones on leafy side streets nestle in the long shadows of Metrotech and the court district.

No sign announces the presence of this unassuming stainless-and-glass space, which manages to be simple without the self-conscious sleekness of SoHo and warm without the cloying appointments of the West Village. The interior conjures the brightness of a Mondrian, with blocks of mustardy yellows playing against patches of sunlight angling through the front window. Conversations spread from table to table, and the place glows with the heady energy of a casual dinner party or cocktails at twilight (even in the absence of a liquor license).

Chef Michael Moorhouse was formerly the pastry maestro at Alison on Dominick, but here he cooks up more substantial lunch and dinner fare (all of which is available as take-out). His menu is free-ranging, offering classic comfort foods (beef tenderloin, garlic mashed potatoes, and buttermilk fried chicken) as well as more elegant versions thereof (goat-cheese terrine, crab cakes with a spiky corn-and-red-pepper relish, and a lamb-and-portobello Wellington).

The proprietor, Patrick Downey, clearly enjoys his role, dispensing dog biscuits, sugar cookies, or wisecracks, depending on which members of your family you bring along. He also mixes the best natural sodas north of the Mason-Dixon line, using syrups made from fruit purées. It takes a lot of trips just to sample all the varieties (sour cherry, raspberry, black currant, vanilla, ginger, apricot, lime, and passion fruit), so it's a good idea to start now, while the Victory still feels like a neighborhood secret—and before Realtors turn Boerum Hill into BoHo and the people who talk to cell phones instead of each other start showing up for lattes. (Open daily for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Entrees $7-$10.)

The Urn—Peter Ackerman, the playwright responsible for "Things You Shouldn't Say Past Midnight," tackles another unmentionable—death. The redoubtable John Wylie leads a fine cast in a funny, if thin, first act that explores a family's high-pitched bewilderment by their late father's peculiar instructions regarding his ashes. Unfortunately, neither the energetic acting nor the sharp direction, by Robert Davenport, can save the dull and pointless second act, which attempts to Explain It All. Let's hope that when Mr. Ackerman tackles politics he'll stick to the one-act format. (Irish Arts Center, 553 W. 51st St. 581-4125. Closes July 24.)

The Weir—Conor McPherson's play takes place in the musty chill of a backwater Irish pub, where a handful of habitués chew the cud of their solitude, spinning ghostly yarns that fill the air with glimmers of fear and resignation. It has a bittersweet charm, but for all the well-crafted talk and the well-observed bonhomie, it is finally a shaggy-bog story. (4/12/99) (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

You Are Now Entering Nellie Oleson—The ribald sketch comedy troupe known as the Nellie Olesons, in an evening of more than twenty new works. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288. Closes July 31.)

LONG RUNS

ART: Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **BEAUTY AND THE BEAST:** Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4100. . . . **BLUE MAN GROUP/TUBES:** Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. . . . **CABARET:** Studio 54, at 254 W. 54th St. 239-6200. . . . **CATS:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **CHICAGO:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **DE LA GUARDA:** Daryl Roth, 20 Union Sq. E., at 15th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . . **FOOTLOOSE:** Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 307-4100. . . . **FORBIDDEN BROADWAY:** Stardust, Broadway at 51st St. 239-6200. . . . **FOSSE:** Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **HEDWIG AND THE ANGRY INCH:** Jane Street Theatre, Hotel Riverview Ballroom, 113 Jane St. 239-6200. . . . **I LOVE YOU, YOU'RE PERFECT, NOW CHANGE:** Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 239-6200. . . . **JEKYLL & HYDE:** Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **LATE-NITE CATECHISM:** St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE LION KING:** New Amsterdam, 214 W. 42nd St. 307-4100. . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **MISS SAIGON:** Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. . . . **OVER THE RIVER AND THROUGH THE WOODS:** John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200. . . . **PERFECT CRIME:** Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 695-3401. . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **RAGTIME:** Ford Center for the Performing Arts, 213 W. 42nd St. 307-4100. . . . **RENT:** Nederlander, 208 W. 41st St. 921-8000. . . . **SECRETS EVERY SMART TRAVELER SHOULD KNOW:** Ibis, 327 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **SIDE MAN:** Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **SMOKEY JOE'S CAFÉ:** Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200. . . . **STOMP:** Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at St. Marks Pl. 477-2477. . . . **SYMPHONIE FANTASTIQUE:** HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. 647-0202. (Closes Aug. 15.) . . . **TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING:** St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St. 239-6200. . . . **WIT:** Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 307-4100.

OUT OF TOWN

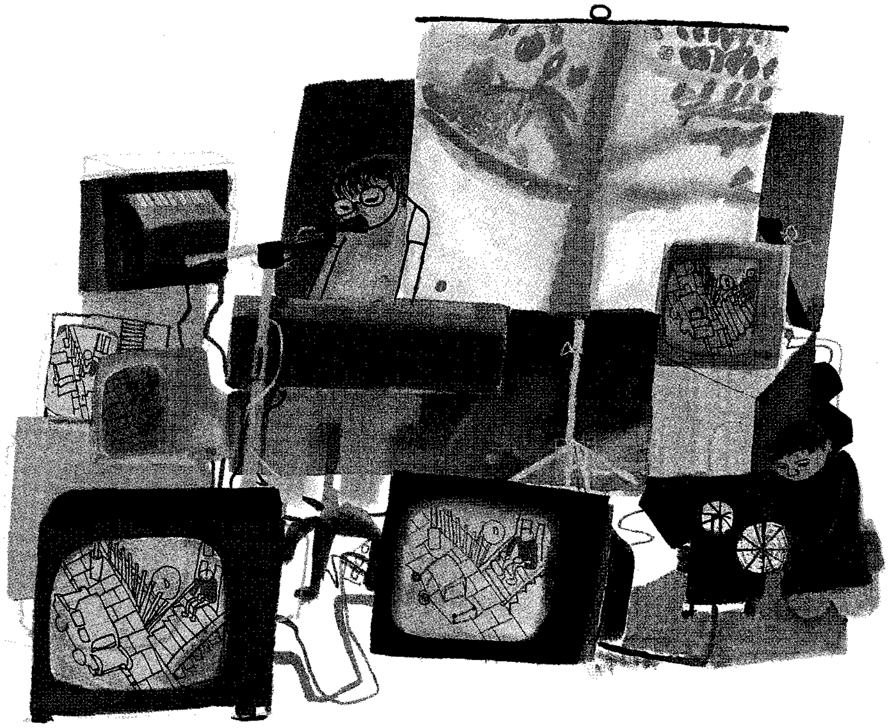
Williamstown Theatre Festival—Main Stage: Lorraine Hansberry's "A Raisin in the Sun," directed by Jack Hofsiss. Viola Davis, Gloria Foster, and Ruben Santiago-Hudson are in the cast. July 21-Aug. 1. . . . Nikos Stage: "The Glimmer Brothers," a new drama about the jazz world by Warren Leight ("Side Man"). Through July 25. (1000 Main St., Williamstown, Mass. 413-597-3399.)

Bay Street Theatre—"The Factory Girls," Frank McGuinness's first play, in which a group of Donegal shirtmakers are faced with plant layoffs. Through Aug. 1. (Long Wharf, Main and Bay Sts., Sag Harbor, N.Y. 516-725-9500.)

Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival—"Twelfth Night" (through Aug. 22) runs in repertory with "Titus Andronicus" (through Aug. 21). (Boscobel Restoration, Garrison, N.Y. For ticket information and directions, call 914-265-9575.)

DANCE

"Merce Cunningham: A Lifetime of Dance"—In the master choreographer's eightieth year, the Lincoln Center Festival presents three programs covering a forty-year span of his career. Each performance will include a world première ("Occasion Piece," featuring Mikhail Baryshnikov) and a New York première ("BIPED" or "Pond Way") alongside older works like "Summerspace" (1958), "Sounddance" (1975), and "Ground Level Overlay" (1995). While Cunningham's use of computer technology in recent years may have altered his working process, audiences will be able to see how the core of his œuvre has remained timeless: humanity expressed through shimmering clarity of movement. (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. July 21, July 23, and July 24 at 8 and July 25 at 7.)



Looper, at Tramps for the Digital Club Festival.

ANNABEL WRIGHT

"Kayassine"—The Laotian word for circus. For its American début, the French acrobatic coöperative Les Arts Sauts spreads out some eight hundred recliner seats and puts on an evening of aerial choreography directly over the heads of the audience. (Damrosch Park, Lincoln Center. 875-5030. July 21-24 at 7:15. . . . **Note:** There will be no late seatings.)

Pilobolus—For its summer season, the Connecticut-based sextet offers three programs, each with a première ("A Selection," about a troupe that misses a train out of Nazi Germany; "Uno, Dos, Tray," about a pair of soldiers and a waitress; or the solo "Femme Noire.") The company's airy repertory works, created over the past quarter-century, make awkward and astonishing movements appear natural. Acrobatic, with strong modern-dance technique, Pilobolus offers a fun and stimulating evening. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. July 21-23 and July 26-27 at 8 and July 24 at 2 and 8. Through July 31.)

Dances for Wave Hill—The outdoor dance series presents works by four artists—Mollie O'Brien ("Marked"), Jill Sigman ("GUN SHY"), Kristen Smiarowski ("Six and One Orange Monster"), and Sarah Stead (an untitled piece)—from the Field, a program that supports young choreographers. (249th St. at Independence Ave., the Bronx. For information, call 718-549-3200. July 21 at 6:30 and July 25 at 5.)

Noche Flamenca—Flamenco dance presented in an intimate *tablao* setting by the nine-member company made up of three dancers (including the incomparable Soledad Barrio), two guitarists, a bass player, and three singers (including the wonderfully *sol y sombra* combination of singers Rafael Jimenez and Antonio Vizarraga). (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 239-6200. July 21-23 and July 27 at 8 and July 24 at 7 and 10. Through July 31.)

OUT OF TOWN

Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival—Martha Clarke's "Vers la Flamme" makes liberal use of the works of Chekhov, Scriabin, and Rachmaninoff. (July 21-22 at 8, July 23 at 8:30, July 24 at 2 and 8:30, and July 25 at 2.) . . . ¶ "Maria the Storm Cloud," presented by the three-woman Seattle company 33 Fainting Spells. (July 22-23 at 8:15 and July 24-25 at 5.) (Becket, Mass. For information about tickets, call 413-243-0745.)

NIGHT LIFE

CONCERTS

Midsummer Night Swing—Dancing under the stars on the Lincoln Center plaza. July 21: A night of polkas and West Texas swing, with Brian Marshall and his Tex-Slavik Playboys and the Hot Club of Cowtown. . . . ¶ July 22: Congolese rumba with Sam Mangwana. . . . ¶ July 23: Trumpeter Wynton Marsalis and the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra perform the music of Duke Ellington. . . . ¶ July 24: Tenor saxophonist Illinois Jacquet and his sixteen-piece orchestra close out the season. (Performances begin at 8:15, with dance lessons starting at 6:30. For more information, call 875-5766.)

Central Park SummerStage—Live music in New York City's back yard. July 21 at 7:30: **Marianne Faithfull.** Her voice—a knowing mix of gravel, steel, and honey—suggests how much she has gone through. Her autobiography, published in 1995, gives the details: British pop stardom, drug addiction, and emotional collapse, followed by a spectacularly dignified return. In 1996, the Courtney Love of her generation released the brutally confessional "A Secret Life," which added a fine chapter to her story. She continues to put her misfortunes to work for her; last year she came out with a recording of Kurt Weill and Bertolt Brecht's "The Seven Deadly Sins," and her well-worn voice does the songs justice. With Hal Willner. . . . ¶ July 22 at 7:30: The **Brian Setzer Orchestra.** A most unexpected success story. Setzer confounded the cynics by sticking to what was once considered a necrological obsession with swing music. Then the movie "Swingers" and the Gap commercial weighed in, and the former Stray Cat was sitting pretty, as the sales of his latest album, "The Dirty Boogie," attest. But Setzer isn't just dressing up: his big band plays it so straight you'd think the latter half of the twentieth century never happened. . . . ¶ July 27 at 7:30: **Ziggy Marley and the Melody Makers.** The legendary Rastaman's son keeps reggae's first family jamming. (Rumsey Playfield, mid-Park at 72nd St. 360-2777.)

Limp Bizkit—Yet another triumph in the great rock tradition of idiosyncratic spelling, this muscle-bound pod of Florida youngsters offers a state-of-the-art look at the unholy marriage of gangsta rap and heavy metal. (Hammerstein Ballroom, Manhattan Center, 311 W. 34th St. 564-4882. July 22 at 7.)

Celebrate Brooklyn!—Led by Harvard grad Dean Wareham, who drove Galaxie 500 to college-rock greatness, the New York quartet **Luna** makes a dreamy kind of music so frankly derivative that it's both disposable and eternal. (Prospect Park Bandshell, Prospect Park W. at 9th St., Brooklyn. 718-855-7882, ext. 52. July 23 at 7:30.)

Bruce Springsteen—The Boss is back, working his way with the E Street Band through a fifteen-night run. (Continental Airlines Arena, the Meadowlands. 212-307-7171. July 24 and July 26-27 at 7:30.)

The Offspring—Though the members of this tuneful post-punk collective are far too old to be as goofy as they are, they have a considerably mature gift for melody and parody (as in "Pretty Fly for a White Guy"). That may be why the group is the only honest-to-God rock band that still manages to find a spot in the rap-and-pop-dominated Top Ten. With Lit. (Jones Beach Theatre. 516-221-1000. July 25 at 6:30.)

Paul Simon and Bob Dylan—In which popular music's two poet laureates embark on a summertime ramble that will either make history or make a mess. Expect ol' Rhymin' Simon to kick out the hits (if only to reclaim a little artistic capital lost in the "Capeman" fiasco); hope for Dylan to rise to the occasion, spurred on by the healthy competition. (Madison Square Garden. 465-6000. July 27 at 8.)

CLUBS

(Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it's advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.)

Digital Club Festival—Formerly the Intel New York Music Festival, this annual gathering of bands has dropped a corporate sponsor in favor of becoming something of an Internet startup. Organized by Andrew Rasiej and Michael Dorf, the folks behind Irving Plaza and the Knitting Factory, respectively, the festival's three hundred and fifty bands perform in venues that have been wired for live streaming over the Internet. If you can't make it to the clubs, you can catch the music at www.digitalclubfest.com. For highlights of the festival, which runs through July 23, see the entries under Bowery Ballroom, Irving Plaza, S.O.B.'s, Tramps, and Wetlands. For more information, call 677-9823.

Bowery Ballroom, 6 Delancey St. (533-2111)—July 21: Dreamy sixties-derived pop dominates the bill when the local group **Ladybug Transistor** joins **Beulah** and **Apples in Stereo.** The exception is **Clem Snide,** a Burroughs-inspired outfit that turns out backcountry ballads rather than neo-psychedelic tunes. July 22: **Everlast,** a tattooed, acoustic-guitar-packing Southern Californian who's selling more records than Elvis (O.K., not quite) by setting Delta blues to hip-hop grooves. July 23: **Guided by Voices.** A few years back, this Dayton-based combo (whose ringleader, Robert Pollard, picked up his flair for finger painting with words while working as a fourth-grade teacher) had gone from cult-confection status to near-stardom. But Pollard's continual revisions of the band's lineup have kept it on the near side of fame. Their forthcoming album, "Do the Collapse," produced by Ric Ocasek, is full of more finely honed songs. But it remains to be seen whether Pollard and company can live up to their reputation as one of the few bands that actually sound better live.

Irving Plaza, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—July 21-22: BUSH. How quickly things change. Just a few years ago, this dreadful Nirvana knockoff was riding high on the threadbare coattails of the grunge revolution. Now one wonders how they found time to get away from taping the inevitable VH1 "Behind the Music" eulogy. July 27: G. LOVE & SPECIAL SAUCE. This funky trio called its latest CD "It's That Easy," but, despite a charismatic singer and a silky groove, the band has had a surprisingly difficult time moving beyond cult stardom—a good thing for its fans. With its back-porch heat and chicken-shack style, G. Love & Special Sauce is a flavor best kept to oneself.

Joe's Pub, 425 Lafayette St. (539-8770)—July 22: Foot-stompin' tunes from the Big Easy, with NATHAN AND THE ZYDECO CHA-CHAS.

Knitting Factory, 74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—July 21: San Francisco's IMPERIAL TEEN play a glorious, whooshing pop, unstoppable and unforgettable. The band members all switch instruments and take turns at the microphone, and their songs are stamped with a youthful enthusiasm that belies their considerable experience. July 22: SCANNER (a.k.a. Robin Rimbaud) captures live cellular-phone conversations from out of the airwaves and incorporates them into his electronic music. July 23: JILL SOBULE. On her breakthrough 1996 single, "I Kissed a Girl," this blond cannonball of talent and charm hooked unsuspecting listeners with her gift for head-spinning couplets and quirky melodies. Her follow-up album, "Happy Town," suffered from the lack of a standout single, but it was still one of her best. With MARY LOU LORD, who is perhaps the world's most successful subway busker.

Maxwell's, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken (201-798-0406)—July 24: APPLES IN STEREO and BEULAH (see Bowery Ballroom). July 25: JILL SOBULE (see Knitting Factory). July 26-27: LUNA (see Celebrate Brooklyn!, in Concerts). With LADYBUG TRANSISTOR (see Bowery Ballroom).

S.O.B.'s, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—July 21: MELKY SEDEK has a pop pedigree: the duo consists of the younger brother and sister of Fugees founder Wyclef Jean. The kids have come up with their own tricks, though. Their début album, "Sister and Brother," is first-rate R. & B. that's firmly rooted in the past yet so up to date it's ahead of its time.

Tramps, 51 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—July 21: The seminal rap act PUBLIC ENEMY, led by the rabble-rousing Chuck D. July 23: LOOPER is the brainchild of Belle and Sebastian bassist Stuart David, his visual-artist wife, Karn, and his photographer brother, guitarist Ronnie Black. Stuart sings and speaks with a soft Scottish lilt, and the group's low-fi songs are infused with the sounds of children cackling, typewriter keys clicking, and other odd sounds. Their performances are backed by Karn's homespun video images of toy scooters, tree houses, and spaceships. The net effect is a childlike exuberance that's still never far from the cruelty of youth, a prime example of which is the lovely ballad "Burning Flies."

Wetlands, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—July 23: A night on the creative boundaries of hip-hop, with RAHZEL, a.k.a. the Godfather of Noyze. A native of Hollis, Queens, this member of the Roots is elevating the status of the human beat box to high art. Also on July 23: Local turntablists the X-ECUTIONERS, who have been juggling beats and winning d.j. competitions for a decade.

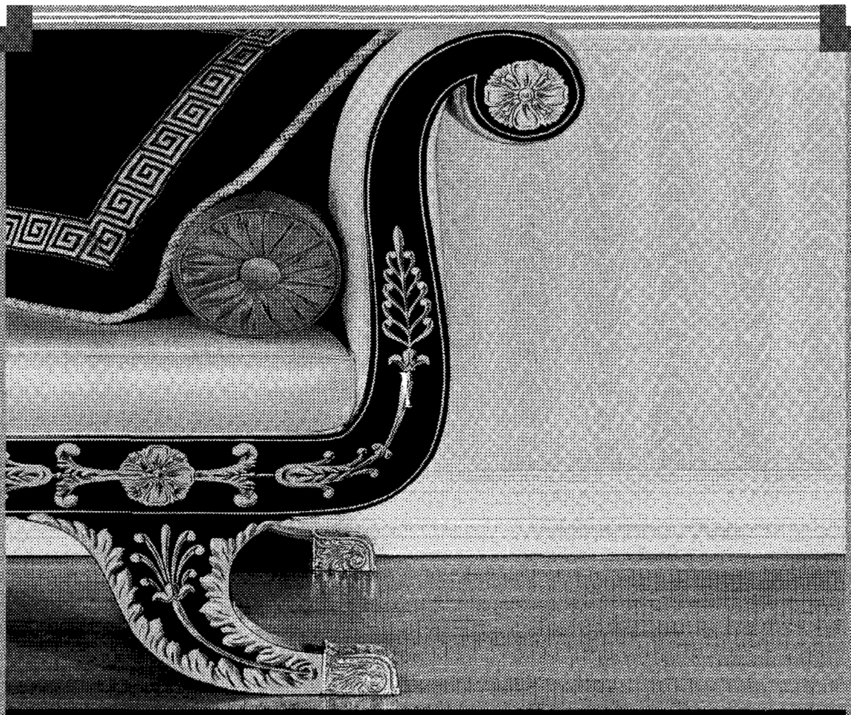
JAZZ AND STANDARDS

Birdland, 315 W. 44th St. (581-3080)—July 21: The exceptional Cuban guitarist JUAN-CARLOS FORMELL reinvigorates *son, changui,* and other traditional forms of his homeland's music. July 22-24: Vocalist HELEN MERRILL. Dining.

Iridium, 44 W. 63rd St. (582-2121)—Through July 25: The JAVON JACKSON quartet. Tenor saxophonist Jackson is deep into the fat-back organ-based groove of the sixties. With Sam Yahel on Hammond organ and Dave Stryker on guitar, this sleek saxophonist brings modern attitude to the blissfully funky textures of the past. Mondays belong to electric-guitar innovator LES PAUL.

Jazz Standard, 116 E. 27th St. (576-2232)—July 21-25: The ANDREW HILL trio. Hill's music is dark, elusive, unsettling, and beautiful. The now-you-see-him-now-you-don't pianist and composer has played the role of the outsider for so long that any exposure to the spotlight must have dizzying effects on him. Hill's artistic peak was in the nineteen-sixties, the only decade that could spawn and tolerate the inherent mysteries of his oblique harmonic stance, the derailed accents of his playing, and his seesaw mid-tempo melodies and trademark dirgelike ballads. It was private music that never really fit. If Hill has mellowed over the years, ironing out his rhythms and taming his attitude, there's still enough of the dogged individualist in him to remind you of the good, and cryptic, old days. Dining.

Joe's Pub, 425 Lafayette St. (539-8770)—July 26-27: Pianist BILL CHARLAP is one of several gifted, thoughtful New York players who are infatuated with lyricism. He may not be the flavor du jour, but his elegance and discernment have a cleansing effect on the city.



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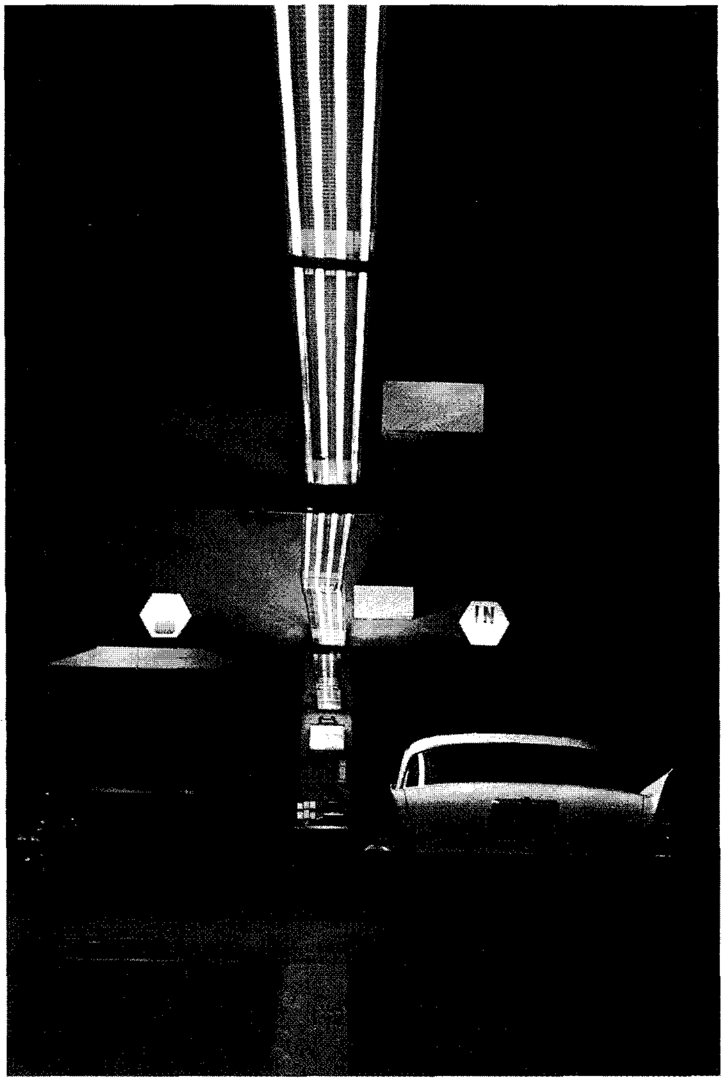


URBAN RENEWAL: *The photographer Ray K. Metzker started out in the late fifties, shooting in the streets of Chicago and Philadelphia, concentrating on quiet but tense moments—three kids in the shadows of a housing project, a sailor trundling his duffel out of the darkness. Metzker developed an intimate visual poetry that had much in common with the Harlem paeans of Roy DeCarava and the damaged America of Robert Frank. The survey of Metzker's early pictures now on view at the Laurence Miller gallery ("Philadelphia, 1963," above, is from the fine new book "City Stills") includes images that are bracing in their contrasts of loneliness and hope.*

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—Through July 25: **RUSSELL GUNN & ETHNOMUSICOLOGY.** When trumpeter Gunn first hit town a few years back, he seemed cut straight from the Marsalis mold—a technically assured, conservative defender of the jazz tradition. Guess again. In no time at all, Gunn was performing with the likes of the saxophonist Oliver Lake and assembling bands and cutting records that embraced contemporary musical culture with gusto. This is jazz whose heart is in the sounds of the street.

Tonic, 107 Norfolk St. (358-7503)—July 21: **MATT DARRIAU'S PARADOX TRIO.** Paradox num-ber one: what kind of a trio has more than three members? Paradox number two: how do you define wildly inventive music that fuses jazz, Balkan rhythms, diverse ethnic flavors, and good old American anarchy? It's best to leave the answers to the imaginative reedman Darriau, who leads this eclectic combo when he's not hooting it up with the Klezmatics.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Through July 25: While not exactly the contemporary versions of Lester Young and Billie Holiday, tenor saxophonist **HOUSTON PERSON** and vocalist **ETTA JONES** continue to make fetching music together—a tradition that started more than twenty-five years ago. Both are sophisticated stylists and also blues people, unashamed to roll in the funk when the mood strikes. The **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** holds sway on Mondays.

OUT OF TOWN

Woodstock '99—Thirty years after the original celebration of peace, love, and mud comes this three-day affair. Boy, have times changed—this festival takes place not on a fallow patch of farmland but on the grounds of the former Griffiss Air Force Base. Along with some fifty bands, including the heavy metal of Megadeth, the sophisticated rap of the Roots, and the feel-good vibes of the Dave Matthews Band, the attractions include beer tents, cash machines, and a retired B-52 bomber. Tickets are a hundred and fifty dollars, and forget about crashing the gate: metal detectors, chain-link fences, and more than three thousand security personnel will also be on hand. (Rome, N.Y. For more information, call 315-336-0014. July 23-25.)

ART

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (879-5500)—"Gustave Moreau: Between Epic and Dream," an exhibition of paintings and drawings that come mostly from the Musée Gustave Moreau, in Paris. Through Aug. 22. . . . ¶ "Prayerbook for a Queen: The Hours of Jeanne D'Evreux," approximately three dozen illustrated pages by one of the masters of medieval illumination, Jean Pucelle (active 1320-34), are on view. Through Aug. 29. . . . ¶ In an adjacent gallery, a related show called "Devotions and Diversions" displays some of the finest northern-European books from the dawn of printmaking. Through Aug. 29. . . . ¶ "Cézanne to van Gogh: The Collection of Dr. Gachet." More than fifty works (by Monet, Pissarro, Guillaumin, Sisley, Renoir, and, above all, Cézanne and van Gogh) owned by van Gogh's doctor have travelled across the Atlantic for the first time. Through Aug. 15. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:30, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 9.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—"The Un-Private House" presents twenty-six houses (via designs, maquettes, digitally enhanced photographs, and interactive computer displays) that update the idea of the four (very un-) solid walls of home. Through Oct. 5. . . . ¶ "Fame After Photography." Through Oct. 5. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, and Thursdays, 10:30 to 5:45; Fridays, 10:30 to 8:15.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (423-3500)—"Surrealism: Two Private Eyes" is rich in terrific works, including such iconic Surrealist masterpieces as René Magritte's "The Rape" (1934), Salvador Dalí's "The Phenomenon of Ecstasy" (1933), and Giorgio de Chirico's "The Disquieting Muses" (1925), and it has two astonishing rooms—one devoted to Cornell boxes, the other to Surrealist bookbinding. There is a lot of marvellous or, at the very least, curious work by lesser-known artists; on the other hand, there is a lot of dreck, both by unknown figures and by famous ones having a bad art day. Through Sept. 12. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 9 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 9 to 8.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-3676)—"The American Century: Art & Culture 1900-2000 (Part I: 1900-50)" is exactly what its unimaginative title implies—a grand, bland survey, full of familiar milestones but remarkably short on fresh connections or surprises. Through Aug. 22; Part II opens Sept. 26. (Open Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St. (769-5100)—The Gottesman Hall of Planet Earth is open, with rock formations, ice-core samples, earthquake and volcanic-events tickers, and other geologic displays. . . . ¶ "Epidemic! The World of Infectious Disease." Through Sept. 6. . . . ¶ "The Endurance: Shackleton's Legendary Antarctic Expedition." Through Oct. 11. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Brooklyn Museum of Art, Eastern Parkway (718-638-5000)—"Winslow Homer: Illustrating America" offers more than a hundred wood engravings, including many made when the artist was covering the Civil War. Through Oct. 10. . . . ¶ "Impressionists in Winter: Effets de Neige." Through Aug. 29. (Open

ON AND OFF THE AVENUE

Travellin' Light

A DAZZLING new Penn Station may someday rival its lost predecessor, and a rail link to Kennedy Airport may ease the long trip to that unlovely outpost, but it's safe to say that the golden era of travel won't be returning anytime soon. These days, the only red cap you're likely to see is on the fellow in the next seat with his hat on backward.

For the light packing that today's self-sufficiency necessitates, the right overnight bag is essential, but that doesn't mean you can't go with a bit of style. At **Gucci**, which is temporarily ensconced in the shell of the old Henri Bendel store (10 W. 57th St.; 826-2600), there's a commodious backpack ($850) fashioned from printed fabric so boisterous it looks like it once belonged to the Hawaiian Punch cartoon guy. A pair of roomy front pockets, capable of holding a Fodor's guide or a folded mackintosh, are in fact designed to conceal a pair of Rollerblades; but for the "Gucci" on its zipper tabs, this tote would be right at home on the shelf of a Malibu surf shop.

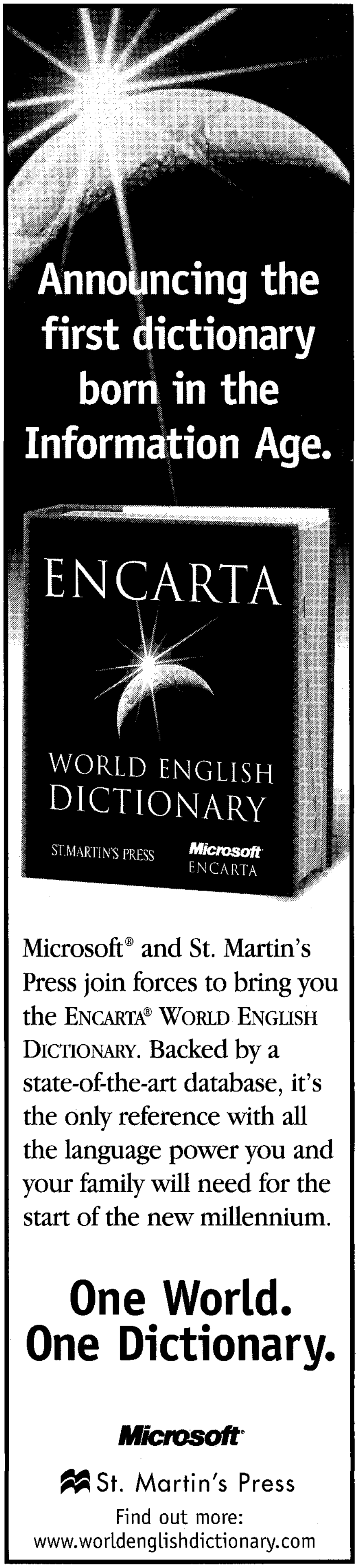
The house of **Prada**, lately in residence in the old Doubleday bookstore (724 Fifth Ave.; 664-0010), has affixed a quartet of wheels to the bottom of a black nylon valise that's shaped like a giant tea cozy ($770). Two curious zippers encircle its bottom, allowing for dramatic vertical expansion. (You could easily stow this case in the overhead bin on the way to Paris, but it is likely to be demoted to checked baggage for the return flight.) More insouciant are the quilted, flower-printed duffels ($140) at **Pierre Deux** (780 Madison Ave.; 570-9343), which are made of the same hand-blocked *tissu de Provence* the shop uses to upholster love seats and to dress up windows. They're squishy enough to accept just one more cashmere camisole or ribald paperback, and they're available in a variety of unpredictable color combinations, including marigold with scarlet.

EDEL RODRIGUEZ

Worlds away from Pierre Deux is **Chrome Hearts** (159 E. 64th St.; 327-0707). This posh dungeon nestled in a town house offers luggage for rock-and-roll moguls and bad-boy actors with prison records. The bags here are beautifully crafted from hefty black leather and decorated with subtly applied medieval crosses and sterling-silver zipper pulls shaped like daggers. Though you might be able to lift the small duffel ($2,300) on your own, it would be nice to have a little help with the garment bag ($4,500), for which silver-hooked hangers ($600-$1,000) are also available.

The people at **Louis Vuitton** (116 Greene St.; 274-9090) well remember the days when cases were king, and they're still willing to indulge customers' fantasies. They didn't blink an eye when asked recently if they'd be able to provide a latter-day Sebastian Flyte with a special-order valise that boasted custom compartments for a Teddy bear, a pair of Sulka pajamas, and two bottles of Château Lafitte (price on request; two-to-three-month wait). Less picky shoppers can settle for a patent-leather duffel ($1,490), printed with "LV"s, from the company's new "Vernis" collection. It's baby blue, a few shades away from iMac blueberry, and Vuitton calls it the Mercer, in honor of the street one block over.

Of course, not everyone needs to part with a thousand bucks to be a happy traveller. The clientele at **Air Market**, a Japanese import store on the cusp of the East Village (97 Third Ave.; 995-5888), is equally divided between six-year-olds and fashion-forward twenty-somethings who appreciate the saccharine charm of the merchandise. A navy nylon tote ($68), embellished with a bright-red drawing of the Gumby-like Mr. Friendly, may not have a fancy pedigree, but it does sport a StarTAC-size front pocket, a double set of straps for wrist or shoulder action, and just enough interior space to accommodate a pareu, a pair of painter's pants, and a passport.



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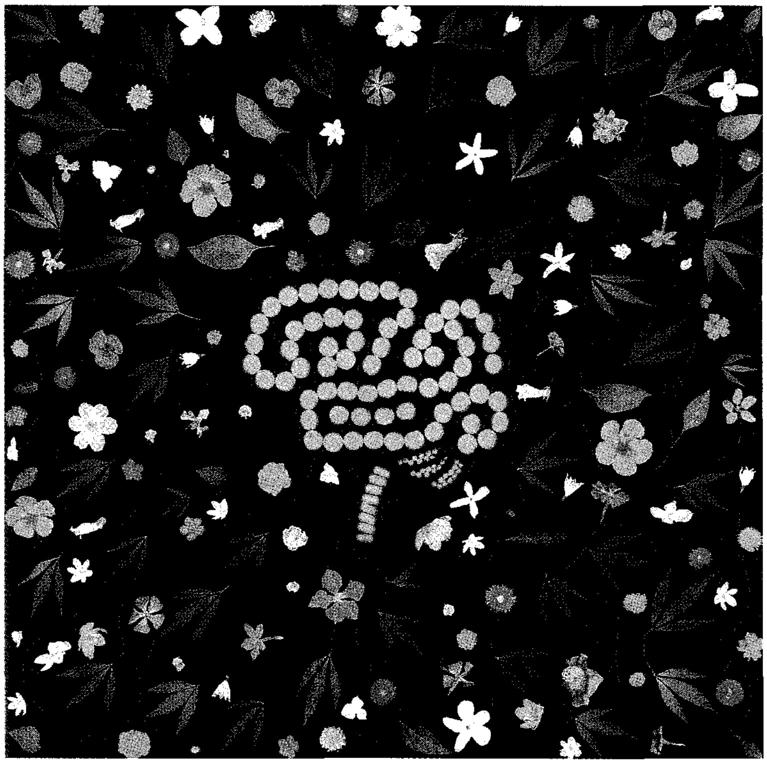
Tuesdays for the Impressionist show only, Wednesdays, and Fridays, 10 to 5; Thursdays, 10 to 8; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St. (849-8300)—"The Huguenot Legacy: English Silver, 1680-1760." In the late seventeenth century, England became a big importer of tea, coffee, chocolate, and Huguenot craftsmen. The result of this odd confluence was a boom in silverware production. French designers, sometimes working for English firms, produced novelties like coffeepots and teakettles as well as newly elaborate sauceboats, tureens, salvers, and saltshakers. The hundred examples here, all from the collection of Alan and Simone Hartman, include some amazingly lavish pieces. The most beautiful might be an understated fluted ladle by Paul Crespin; the most dizzying, a scallop-shell basket by Phillips Garden, has wriggling dolphins for feet and a handle in the form of a mermaid doing a backflip. Through Aug. 8. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

National Academy Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (534-1672)—"Men Without Women." For the latest in the museum's series of "Artist's Eye" exhibitions, the nonagenarian painter Paul Cadmus has turned the stately galleries here into a Beaux Arts locker room. Images of men in various states of undress, from life models to wrestlers, bathers, and shirtless farmhands, share the walls with genteel, fully clad masculine portraits. Chosen from among more than five thousand works in the museum's collections, Cadmus's sixty-six selections include works by such notables as William Merritt Chase, Edwin Dickinson, John Koch, and Robert Rauschenberg. Some of the finest pictures, however, are Cadmus's own, presented in a small side room. Among them is a 1934 etching that shows an actual locker room—at the Y.M.C.A., no less—as a festive tangle of limbs and undergarments. In Cadmus's world, connoisseurship and libido have always shared the same facilities. Through Aug. 29. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, and Saturdays and Sundays, noon to 5, and Fridays, 10 to 6.)

OUT OF TOWN

Katonah Museum of Art, Route 22 at Jay St., Katonah, N.Y. (914-232-9555)—"WILDflowers," an exhibition of contemporary floral imagery, gathers paintings, sculptures, photographs, and videos by forty artists, including Fred Tomaselli, Joan Nelson, Thomas Woodruff, Sally Apfelbaum, and Richard Rothman. Through Oct. 3. (Open daily, except Mondays, noon to 5.)



"Brain with Flowers" (1990-97), by Fred Tomaselli, in "WILDflowers," at the Katonah Museum of Art.

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Summer-hours warning: Many galleries are open Mondays through Fridays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6. Others follow the normal Tuesday-to-Saturday schedule. It's best to call ahead.)

Peter Saul—Ten gleefully lowbrow paintings by cartoon figuration's *chef d'école*. In one of his latest pictures, a quartet of pink putti flutter mournfully over the body of Bouguereau's Venus, who has decomposed to the point where she resembles a platter of nachos topped with melted cheddar. It's a relatively sedate image compared with some of the earlier pieces on view, in which Saul's manic misanthropy is directed at O. J. Simpson, Jeffrey Dahmer, Ronald Reagan, and Peter Schjeldahl, the chief art critic for this magazine. The Reagan piece in particular is one of Saul's finest works. Through Aug. 12. (Adams, 41 W. 57th St. 644-5665.)

Short List—Michael Brennan, Yoshii, 20 W. 57th St. 265-8876. Through July 31. . . . **Adriane Herman,** Baumgold, 128 E. 72nd St. 861-7338. Through July 30. . . . **Jasper Johns,** Sheehan, 20 W. 57th St. 489-3331. Through July 31. . . . **Liza Lou,** Vanderbilt Hall, Grand Central Terminal. Through July 26. . . . **Odd Nerdrum,** Forum, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 355-4545. Through July 30. . . . **Stephan Cornelius Roberts,** Stone, 113 E. 90th St. 987-4997. Through July 23. . . . **May Stevens,** Ryan, 24 W. 57th St. 397-0669. Through Aug. 25.

GALLERIES—CHELSEA

John Geary—"Hi," an exhibition of meticulously rendered charcoal drawings of simians and a video. There is something almost gross about the lushness of charcoal which works well with these slightly treacly but quite weird portraits of our evolutionary cousins. Just about every exhibition these days has to have a video element: in this one, the artist films reactions to his saying hi to people on Venice Beach. It provides just enough absurdism to complement the oddness of the highly detailed apes. Through Aug. 6. (Fredericks, 504 W. 22nd St. 633-6555.)

Bill King—"Pompeii," a quintet of the artist's life-size long-legged figures in cast aluminum. Four of them wear expressions of demented excitement which seem at odds with their rather ordinary occupations: one writes in a diary, another chews on an hors d'oeuvre, and two others pucker up for a big-screen-style kiss. King's brand of humorous figuration has always been precariously silly, and a bit lightweight. At their best, though, as in this group, his gaunt personages can seem as tart and deft as Daumier's. Through July 31. (Brenda Taylor, 529 W. 20th St. 463-7166.)

"Hang Time"—A summery group show, curated by Debra Singer and Lauren Ross, with works by nine artists (or art teams) devoted to leisure and sport: Pam Lins photographed Nerf footballs in midflight, Janet Cohen charted baseball pitch location, Cristian Alexa documented his protest against the daily grind (he lay around in a hammock in a park near Wall Street). Through Aug. 1. (White Columns, 320 W. 13th St. 924-4212.)

Group Show—A trio of painters—Luke Dowd, Chris Faust, and Frank Webster—with a slackerish penchant for inert geometric forms, suburban architecture, and washed-out, anemic colors. This may not sound like much of a premise, but the pictures themselves, especially Faust's economical views of bungalows and swimming pools, have a kind of lethargic, slow-release charm. Through July 31. (Martz, 529 W. 20th St. 206-3686.)

Short List—Saint Clair Cemin, Cheim & Read, 521 W. 23rd St. 242-7727. Through July 30. . . . **Laura Emrick,** Greene Naftali, 526 W. 26th St. 463-7770. Through July 30. . . . **Rudi Molacek,** Gasser & Grunert, 524 W. 19th St. 807-9494. Through July 30. . . . **Michael Paha,** Feigen, 535 W. 20th St. 929-0500. Through July 30. . . . **Rirkrit Tiravanija,** Gavin Brown's Enterprise, 436 W. 15th St. 627-5258. Through Aug. 31.

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

Bill Komoski—A suite of compelling abstract paintings that feature a repeated image such as a rippling bedsheet tacked down at its corners. The sheet shapes anchor the images, which otherwise billow up with twisting rivulets of pale primary colors. De Kooning's ribbony works from the eighties inevitably come to mind, but Komoski's images are less painterly and more calculated, with a distinctively disjointed, breezy energy. Through July 23. (Feature, 76 Greene St. 941-7077.)

Martin Ramirez (1885-1963)—Twelve previously unexhibited drawings by one of the greatest outsider artists of the century, a mute schizophrenic who lived the last thirty years of his life in a California mental hospital. Though Ramirez's fantastical landscapes usually include stylized cowboys, women, and deer, the finest are often the simplest, as in an image here of a narrow road, bordered by spiky pickets, that descends steeply from the mouth of a tunnel. Its precipitousness has a lovely, dreamlike purity. Through July 30. (Kind, 136 Greene St. 925-1200.)

Short List—Barton Lidice Beneš, Lennon, Weinberg, 560 Broadway. 941-0012. Through July 30. . . . **Sylvie Fleury** and **John Armleder,** Ace, 275 Hudson St. 255-5599. Both shows through Aug. 30. . . . **Austin Thomas,** Sara Meltzer's On View, 588 Broadway. 343-8256. Through July 30. . . . **Susan Wanklyn,** Pelavin, 13 Jay St. 925-9424. Through Sept. 18.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Judith Joy Ross—Contemporary black-and-white portraits—a congressman looking ultra-stiff in a power suit, teen-age twins who seem just as awkward in their tie-dyed T-shirts—made with an old-fashioned eight-by-ten-inch view camera. Through Aug. 27. (Pace Wildenstein MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. 759-7999.)

"Apollo 11: One Giant Leap"—Celebrating the thirtieth anniversary of the mission, with images from liftoff to footfall to splashdown. Through Aug. 20. (Schickler, 560 Broadway. 431-6363.)

"Down from Up"—Classic and contemporary images made from an elevated vantage point, by such artists as Alvin Langdon Coburn, Diane Cook, Mario Giacomelli, Emmet Gowin, Len Jenshel, and Laszlo Moholy-Nagy. Through July 30. (Alan Klotz/Photocollect, 22 E. 72nd St. 327-2211.)

"The Full Monty"—Male nudes through the ages, by such photographers as Wilhelm von Gloeden, Man Ray, George Platt Lynes, Diane Arbus, and Peter Hujar. Through Aug. 13. (Houk, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 750-7070.)

"Stars & Stripes"—Images of Old Glory in photographs, folk art, and outsider art. Through Aug. 14. (Ricco/Maresca, 529 W. 20th St. 627-4819.)

"Summer Reading"—Photographs and photograms of books, including works by Andrew Bush, Tim Maul, Abelardo Morrell, Fawn Potash, Allison Rossiter, and Masao Yamamoto. Through Aug. 27. (Richardson, 560 Broadway. 343-1255.)

"Summer Salon VI"—An always breezy group show, this time featuring works by Peter Garfield, Orit Raff, and Leonard Nimoy. Through Aug. 20. (Benrubi, 52 E. 76th St. 517-3766.)

"Thin Air"—Minimalist works by James Welling, Randy West, Bing Wright, and others. Through Aug. 20. (Saul, 560 Broadway. 431-0747.)

"Thirteen"—Photographs by artists from the latest issue of *Blind Spot*, among them Graciela Iturbide, Barbara Ess, Vik Muniz, and Rosalind Solomon. Through Aug. 20. (Mann, 210 Eleventh Ave., at 25th St. 989-7600.)

International Center of Photography—"Sea Change: The Seascape in Contemporary Photography." Through Sept. 26. . . . ¶ "Myths, Dreams, and Realities in Contemporary Argentine Photography." Through Sept. 26. (1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. 860-1777. Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, 10 to 5; Fridays, 10 to 8; Saturdays and Sundays, 10 to 6.)

Short List—**WILLIAM GEDNEY,** Gallery 292, at 120 Wooster St. 431-0292. Through July 31. . . . **CLARA GUTSCHE,** Americas Society, Park Ave. at 68th St. 249-8950. Open Sundays; through July 25. . . . **JAMES KARALES,** Greenberg, 120 Wooster St. 334-0010. Through July 31. . . . **DAVID LA CHAPELLE,** Shafrazi, 119 Wooster St. 274-9300. Through Sept. 15. . . . **RAY K. METZKER,** Laurence Miller, 20 W. 57th St. 397-3930. Through Aug. 13. . . . **EZRA STOLLER** and **HENRI CARTIER-BRESSON,** Danziger, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St. 734-5300. Through Aug. 13 and Aug. 31, respectively. . . . **FRANCESCA WOODMAN,** Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. 977-7160. Through Aug. 31.

(See the museum listings for photography exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art and the American Museum of Natural History.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC

OPERA

Opera Nova—This subversive company continues its entertaining assault on opera's core repertoire by turning Mozart's "The Magic Flute" into "Magic Flutes," which in this story is the name of a breakfast cereal; the owner of the cereal company, Regina della Notte, uses her influence to create havoc in the studio of station WAM-TV (much of whose programming is sponsored by her new and improved product). Not for the classically constrained. (Sanford Meisner Theatre, 164 Eleventh Ave., at 22nd St. July 21-23 at 7:30, July 24 at 2 and 7:30, and July 25 at 3. For information about tickets, call 724-8204.)

"The Peony Pavilion"—The final cycle of Lincoln Center Festival's presentation of this twenty-hour Ming-dynasty Chinese opera, being offered in six three-and-a-quarter-hour episodes. (LaGuardia Concert Hall, Amsterdam Ave. at 65th St. July 23 at 4 and 8:30 and July 24-25 at 2 and 7. For information about tickets, call 875-5030.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique—John Eliot Gardiner founded this orchestra in 1990 to explore the application of historical performance practices to the interpretation of nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century symphonic music. Beethoven and Berlioz have both fared well with the group's approach (which includes, but is not limited to, the use of period instruments); but perhaps the most striking beneficiary has been Schumann, whose orchestral scoring, traditionally rejected as inept, finally comes across as distinctive and persuasive. The Lincoln Center Festival presents the ensemble in four concerts that represent the variety of Schumann's symphonic output. July 21 at 8: A concert with commentary involving the Conzertstück for Four Horns, the Fantasy for Piano and Orchestra (adumbrating the familiar Piano Concerto, and here featuring Robert Levin), and the revised version, from 1851, of the Symphony No. 4. (Alice Tully Hall.) . . . ¶ July 22 at 8: The Symphonies No. 2 and No. 3, as well as the Cello Concerto (with David Watkin). (Alice Tully Hall.) . . . ¶ July 23 at 8: The Symphony No. 1, the Piano Concerto (with Mr. Levin), and the early version, from 1841, of what would grow into the Symphony No. 4 (with Brahms, for one, regretting the composer's emendations). (Alice Tully Hall.) . . . ¶ July 25 at 7: Soprano Hillevi Martinpelto, mezzo-soprano Catherine Denley, tenor Steven Davislim, baritone Dietrich Henschel, bass Mark Beesley, the Monteverdi Choir, and the American Boychoir join Mr. Gardiner and the orchestra for the "Scenes from Goethe's 'Faust.' " (Avery Fisher Hall.) (For information about tickets to all concerts, call 875-5030.)

Mostly Mozart—The festival's thirty-third season opens as Gerard Schwarz conducts the Festival Orchestra in his own symphonic arrangement of excerpts from Bach's "The Art of Fugue" and Haydn's Symphony No. 100, as well as Mozart's "Die Entführung aus dem Serail" Overture, his D-Major Flute Concerto (featuring James Galway), and arias from "La Clemenza di Tito," "Don Giovanni," and the C-Minor Mass (all with mezzo-soprano Frederica von Stade). (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. July 27-28 at 8. The festival continues through Aug. 21.)

RECITALS

"Music in the Garden"—The outdoor series presents instrumental and vocal music on Marian themes from the twelfth through the fifteenth centuries, performed by the Choraulos ensemble. (Church of the Holy Trinity, 316 E. 88th St. July 21 at 7:15. Admission by contribution.)

Mannes International Keyboard Institute—The concluding concerts of this gathering of pianists. July 21 at 8: In his New York début recital, Massimiliano Ferrati, winner of the 1998 International Busoni Competition, performs Beethoven's Sonata in C Minor (Op. 111), Chopin's First Ballade, and Mussorgsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition." . . . ¶ July 24 at 8: Sergei Babayan, a laureate of the Busoni and Queen Elizabeth of Belgium competitions and now a noted pedagogue at the Cleveland Institute of Music, offers works by Rachmaninoff, Carl Vine, and Bach. (Mannes College of Music, 150 W. 85th St. Tickets at the door.)

New York Philomusica Chamber Ensemble—Performing Beethoven's Clarinet Trio and D-Major Piano Trio (the "Ghost"). (Trinity Church, Broadway at Wall St. July 22 at 1. No tickets necessary.)

"The American Century"—A series of hour-long recitals, connected with the Whitney Museum of American Art's exhibition about art and culture in twentieth-century America, continues, as a string quartet plays movements by Copland, Ives, Barber, Griffes, Cowell, and Gershwin. (Madison Ave. at 75th St. July 22 at 6:30. No tickets required beyond museum admission; for more information, call 877-944-8639.)

Eight Strings and a Whistle—A flute-viola-and-cello trio, with guitarist Winslow Browning, performs music by Schubert, Roussel, and Radamés Gnattali, among others. (St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 346 W. 20th St. July 22 at 7:30. Tickets at the door.)

LARA TOMLIN

SHIPSHAPE SONATAS: *Bargemusic, New York's floating concert hall for chamber music, operates as a sort of artistic co-op: the seven members of its Resident Artists Committee take turns programming, and often performing in, its recitals. This week, the responsibility falls to the violinist Mark Peskanov, who will spend two evenings and an afternoon playing Beethoven's ten violin sonatas—an unusual enterprise for a venue so egalitarian that it rarely spotlights an individual performer for a whole concert, let alone three. (So as not to shirk his duties in assembling an ever-changing performing roster, Mr. Peskanov has arranged to interpret these works with three different collaborators.) Bargemusic regulars will welcome the opportunity to hear this laureate of Carnegie Hall's Isaac Stern Award and the Avery Fisher Career Grant survey such magisterial repertoire, the more so since Beethoven's sonatas wed soloistic virtuosity to the give-and-take spirit of chamber music.*

Bargemusic—Mark Peskanov interprets all ten of Beethoven's violin sonatas, in chronological order. July 22 at 7:30: The Sonatas No. 1, No. 2, No. 3, and No. 4, with pianist Gerald Robbins. . . . ¶ July 23 at 7:30: The Sonatas No. 5 (the "Spring"), No. 6, and No. 7, with pianist Doris Stevenson. . . . ¶ July 25 at 4: The Sonatas No. 8, No. 9 (the "Kreutzer"), and No. 10, with pianist Paul Ostrovsky. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-4061.)

Summergarden—In this installment of the Museum of Modern Art's summer series of twentieth-century music, which focusses this season on women composers from around the world, cellist Kristina Reiko Cooper and pianist Joel Sachs (the series' organizer) perform works by Su Lian Tan (from Malaysia), Marta Ptaszynska (Poland), Galina Ustvolskaya (Russia), Jacqueline Fontyn (Belgium), and Franghiz Ali-Zadeh (Azerbaijan). (Sculpture Garden, Museum of Modern Art, 14 W. 54th St. July 23-24 at 8:30. No tickets necessary.)

"Sundays on the Island"—Presenting Schubert's String Trio in B-Flat Major (D. 581) and Brahms's G-Minor Piano Quartet. (Le Refuge Inn, 620 City Island Ave., City Island, the Bronx. 718-885-2478. July 25 at noon.)

OUT OF TOWN

(A selective listing of festival events within a reasonable drive from New York City. Call the presenters for complete schedules.)

Tanglewood—July 21 at 7: Pianist Emanuel Ax is joined by actor Patrick Stewart for Strauss's melodrama "Enoch Arden" (after Tennyson) and by mezzo-soprano Susan Graham for songs by Strauss, Hahn, and Debussy. . . . ¶ July 22 at 8:30: The men's vocal ensemble Chanticleer offers an all-American program that includes compositions by Steven Stuckey and Paul Schoenfield. . . . ¶ July 23 at 6: Choral and chamber works by Strauss. . . . ¶ July 23 at 8:30: Roberto Abbado conducts the Boston Symphony in Strauss's incidental music to "Der Bürger als Edelmann" (with numerous soloists, including Mr. Stewart as narrator), his "Burleske" (with Mr. Ax as the piano soloist), and "Till Eulenspiegel." . . . ¶ July 24 at 8:30: Grieg's incidental music for "Peer Gynt," with Seiji Ozawa conducting the Boston Symphony in the original settings and Wynton Marsalis leading the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra in Ellington's versions of Grieg's pieces. Various Marsalis arrangements fill out the program. . . . ¶ July 25 at 2:30: Mr. Ozawa, Tan Dun, and Robert Spano take turns at the podium in a program that includes pieces by Mr. Tan, Mahler (his "Songs of a Wayfarer," with Ms. Graham as soloist), and Tchaikovsky. . . . ¶ July 27 at 8:30: Boston Musica Viva offers puppet stagings of Nicholas Maw's "Ghost Dances" and Judith Weir's "Consolations of Scholarship." (Lenox, Mass. 888-266-1200. . . . **NOTE:** The Tanglewood Music Center Festival of Contemporary Music, with George Benjamin as composer-in-residence, runs July 22-27; call the box office for concert details.)

Newport Music Festival—The conclusion of this year's festival, which takes place in various Bellevue Avenue mansions and this year features music by Rachmaninoff. Here are some of the final week's highlights. July 21 at 9: A benefit after-dinner concert in which the Argentine pianist Nelson Goerner performs Rachmaninoff's Sonata No. 2, plus works by Schubert, Chopin, and Ravel. (Rosecliff.) . . . ¶ July 22 at 9: A program of opera arias, in addition to instrumental fantasies on operatic themes. (The Breakers.) . . . ¶ July 23 at 9: Violinist Erick Friedman, with several colleagues. (The Breakers.) . . . ¶ July 24 at 5: High tea and conversation with the distinguished English pianist Moura Lympany. (Ochre Court Dining Room.) . . . ¶ July 24 at 11:45 P.M.: The "Italy" volume of Liszt's "Années de Pèlerinage," performed by pianist Hamish Milne. (Marble House.) . . . ¶ July 25 at 9: Dubravka Tomšič performs piano works by Bach/Siloti, Brahms (including Book Two of his "Paganini Variations"), and Saint-Saëns (his G-Minor Piano Concerto, with Piers Lane assisting at the second keyboard). (The Breakers.) (Newport, R.I. 401-849-0700.)

Caramoor—July 22 at 4:30: Harpsichordist Bradley Brookshire plays works by Giovanni Picchi, Wilhelm Friedemann Bach, Domenico Scarlatti, Handel (his E-Major Suite), and Bach (his D-Major Partita). . . . ¶ July 23 at 8: Solo and chamber music by Lera Auerbach. . . . ¶ July 24 at 8:30: Donald Runnicles conducts the Orchestra of St. Luke's in an all-Mozart concert. . . . ¶ July 25 at 4:30: Pianist Mitsuko Uchida performs an all-Schubert program that comprises three impromptus and the Sonatas in A Minor (D. 784) and D Major (D. 850). (Katonah, N.Y. 914-232-1252.)

Glimmerglass Opera—July 22 at 8: "Rigoletto." . . . ¶ July 23 at 8 and July 26 at 2: "The Abduction from the Seraglio," in English. . . . ¶ July 24 at 8 and July 27 at 2: The opening performances of "Central Park," a triptych of one-act operas whose plots all unroll in the green heart of Manhattan: Deborah Drattell's "The Festival of Regrets," with a libretto by Wendy Wasserstein; Michael Torke's "Strawberry Fields," with a libretto by A. R. Gurney; and Robert Beaser's "The Food of Love," with a libretto by Terrence McNally. . . . ¶ July 25 at 2: Monteverdi's "Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria." (Cooperstown, N.Y. 607-547-2255.)

Norfolk Chamber Music Festival—July 23 at 8: The New York Woodwind Quintet, with several colleagues, plays Mozart's Quintet for Piano and Winds and Gounod's "Petite Symphonie." . . . ¶ July 24 at 8: The Tokyo String Quartet (with its new cellist, Clive Greensmith) performs quartets by Haydn (in E-Flat Major, Op. 64, No. 6), Schumann (in A Minor, Op. 41, No. 1), and Ravel. (Route 44, Norfolk, Conn. 860-542-3000.)

Aston Magna Festival—Period-instrument performances of works on classical themes by such Baroque composers as Michele Mascitti (his "Psyché" divertissement), Louis-Nicolas Clérambault, Antoine Forqueray, and Rameau (including his cantata "Orphée"). (Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, N.Y. 914-758-7425. July 23 at 8. . . . ¶ St. James Church, Great Barrington, Mass. July 24 at 6. For information about tickets, call 800-875-7156.)

Maverick Concerts—July 24 at 8: Peter Schickele presides over a benefit concert. . . . ¶ July 25 at 3: Piano trios by Haydn, Dvořák, and Mendelssohn. (Woodstock, N.Y. 914-679-8217.)

Music Mountain—The St. Lawrence String Quartet plays quartets by Haydn (in D Minor, Op. 76, No. 2) and Schumann (in A Major, Op. 41, No. 3), as well as Weber's Clarinet Quintet (with Todd Palmer assisting). (Falls Village, Conn. 860-824-7126. July 25 at 3.)

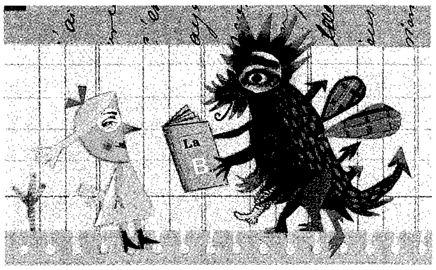
ABOVE AND BEYOND

Bang on a Trash Can—Musician Skip LaPlante is a classically trained double-bassist, but for the past twenty-five years he's preferred to make his own instruments out of whatever is lying about. Hubcaps, cardboard tubes, forks, and pipes are just a few of the items he turns to musical use. On July 23, from 2 to 4, he leads workshops for children and adults on how to make instruments out of found objects. Then, at 8 that evening, his seven-person ensemble, Music for Homemade Instruments, presents a concert using his creations. (The Waterfront Museum and Showboat Barge, 290 Conover St., Red Hook, Brooklyn. For more information, call 718-624-4719.)

Readings—July 21 at 7: By Lee Ranaldo, Richard Hell, David Amram, Brian Hassett, and other contributors to the "*Rolling Stone* Book of the Beats," in an evening that also includes music by John Cassady (Neal's son) and others. (Bitter End, 149 Bleecker St. Tickets at the door.) . . . ¶ July 26 at 7:30: By Kara Swisher, Gary Rivlin, and Po Bronson, from their respective accounts of the new-media world, "aol.com," "The Plot to Get Bill Gates," and "The Nudist on the Late Shift and Other Tales of Silicon Valley." (Barnes & Noble, 33 E. 17th St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ July 27 at 7: By Ralph Fiennes, Joseph Fiennes, and Sophie Fiennes, from the novel "Blood Ties," which was written by Jennifer Lash, their late mother. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. 734-5134.)

BOOK CURRENTS

Fairy Dust



SARA FANELLI

TRADITIONAL fairy tales fell out of favor in the nineteen-seventies. Feminists and intellectuals frowned on heroines like Snow White, whose defining characteristic was her physical beauty—an attribute so important to the Prince that he decided to marry her at first glance. It didn't matter that she was dead. Today, in response to the rising popularity of such television shows as "Teletubbies" (whose imparted wisdom is limited to jewels like "Oooh! Wha dat?"), there's a renewed interest in the old tales—if only for their unambiguous lessons in right and wrong.

In his new psychological study, **The Witch Must Die: How Fairy Tales Shape Our Lives** (Basic), Sheldon Cashdan analyzes dozens of stories in terms of the seven deadly sins. He explains how children's empathy for a character like Snow White, who embodies Vanity, may be less important than their identification with the evil queen: "As children mature, 'kill thine enemy' needs to evolve into 'know thine enemy" . . . [They] need opportunities to become conversant with parts of themselves they are going to have to deal with for the rest of their lives." In a lighter vein, Cashdan notes that one early version of "Little Red Riding Hood" featured the heroine doing a striptease for the wolf before jumping into bed with him.

Fairy tales, of course, aren't so much told as recycled. Charlotte Craft's deft retelling of **King Midas and the Golden Touch** (Morrow Junior) will appeal to traditionalists, and Kinuko Y. Craft's lush illustrations of royal rose gardens and chests of gleaming gold are sure to enthrall listeners too young to read the book themselves. In **A Treasury of North American Folk Tales** (Norton), editor Catherine Peck defines a North American folktale as "almost any narrative from the earliest Native American legend to the joke you told at the water cooler this morning." The anthology includes an Algonquin version of "Cinderella" which turns the tables on the story's usual premise: in this tale the Prince is invisible to everyone but the village pariah, a frail girl who shows up dressed in birch bark and chooses *him*.

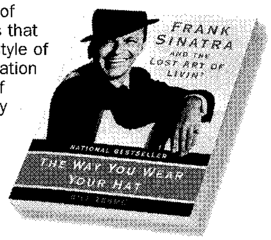
Books.

[AT BARNES & NOBLE]

Endless Entertainment and the Selection to Match

THE WAY YOU WEAR YOUR HAT

by Bill Zehme


FRANK SINATRA AND THE LOST ART OF LIVIN'
NATIONAL BESTSELLER
THE WAY YOU WEAR YOUR HAT

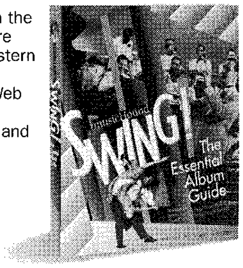
Bill Zehme presents a marvelous collection of previously untold stories and unseen photos that express the timeless romance and classic style of the Frank Sinatra mystique. With the cooperation of Old Blue Eyes himself, as well as many of Sinatra's family and friends, Zehme perfectly captures the man and the style that made Sinatra famous. (HarperPerennial)

Pub. Price: $14.00 Discount **10%**

Our Price: $12.60

MUSICHOUND SWING!

edited by Steve Knopper



Swing's the thing and MusicHound hops on the bandwagon with its own expertise in a genre that ranges from jump blues to country western influences through today's neo-swing. Augmented by biographies, play lists and Web site information on 300+ artists like Louis Armstrong, Sammy Davis, Jr., Louis Prima, and Roomful of Blues, this compendium gives swingers the lowdown. (Visible Ink Press)

Pub. Price: $19.95 Discount **10%**

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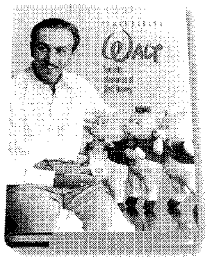
REMEMBERING WALT

by Amy Boothe Green & Howard E. Green



In this collection of personal reminiscences, more than one hundred people recall the ways their lives were touched by Walt Disney: animators who trained under him, directors inspired by his vision, actors who sought his support, and family members who knew him best. Illustrated with rare photographs, this is an intimate portrait of a man whose energy and imagination sparked an industry. (Hyperion)

Pub. Price: $29.95 Discount **20%**

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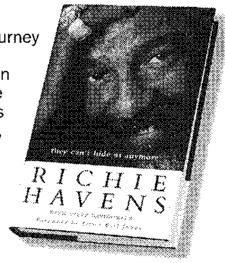
THEY CAN'T HIDE US ANYMORE

by Richie Havens



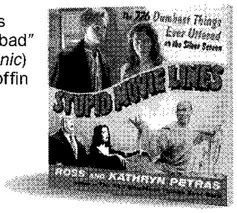
This candid memoir explores Richie Havens' journey from the streets of Brooklyn's Bed-Stuy to the Woodstock stage through a legacy of activism in environmental, young people's and nonviolence causes. From his unique vantage point, Havens observes Dylan, Baez, Hendrix and others who, like himself, made social consciousness an integral part of popular music. (Spike)

Pub. Price: $24.00 Discount **20%**

Our Price: $19.20

STUPID MOVIE LINES

by Ross & Kathryn Petras



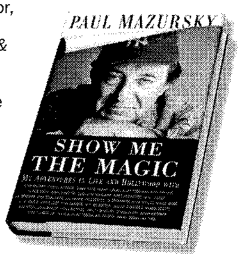
The authors of *The 776 Stupidest Things Ever Said* share their vision for the best of the worst utterances in screen history. Beauties such as Leonardo DiCaprio's understatement "This is bad" (spoken when the ship hits the iceberg in *Titanic*) fit in nicely with classic lines like "Suck the coffin mushroom now" (*The Ultimate Vampire*) and "Visits? That would indicate visitors," (*Plan 9 from Outer Space*). (Villard)

Pub. Price: $9.95 Discount **10%**

Our Price: $8.95

SHOW ME THE MAGIC

by Paul Mazursky



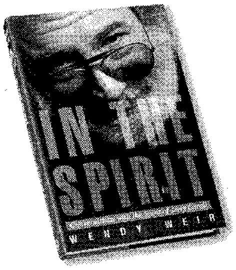
Even by Hollywood standards, as writer, director, actor, and producer, Mazursky has created an outstanding body of work. With films like *Bob & Carol & Ted & Alice* to his credit and genius filmmakers like Federico Fellini as friends, Mazursky is a true celebrity insider. Behind the scenes stands a witty and very candid man whose refreshing personal perspective on life comes shining through in this anecdotal biography. (Simon & Schuster)

Pub. Price: $25.00 Discount **20%**

Our Price: $20.00

IN THE SPIRIT

by Wendy Weir



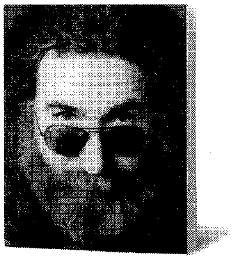
For three years, Wendy Weir, sister of Grateful Dead member Bob Weir, has maintained telepathic communication with the late and legendary Jerry Garcia. Now, in this illuminating book, she shares his insight, wisdom and humor with the world. (Harmony Books)

Pub. Price: $24.00 Discount **20%**

Our Price: $19.20

GARCIA

by The Editors of *Rolling Stone*



The lavishly illustrated biography of the legendary lead singer of the Grateful Dead is now available in paperback. Compiled by the editors of *Rolling Stone* magazine, *Garcia* includes writings by Ken Kesey, Mikal Gilmore and Jann Wenner, as well as photographs and drawings by Annie Leibovitz, R. Crumb and Allen Ginsburg. It is a lasting testament to one of rock music's greatest stars. (Little, Brown)

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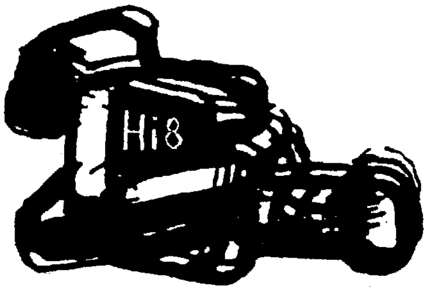


THE MOVIES

OPENING

Cabaret Balkan—An episodic black comedy that follows many different characters around Belgrade on a single night. Directed by Goran Paskaljevic. In Serbian. Opening July 23. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Quad Cinema.)

Drop Dead Gorgeous—A comedy about a teenage beauty contest, with Kirstie Alley, Ellen Barkin, Kirsten Dunst, and Denise Richards. Directed by Michael Patrick Jann. Opening July 23.

The Haunting—A tale of the supernatural, with Liam Neeson, Catherine Zeta-Jones, Owen Wilson, and Lili Taylor. Directed by Jan De Bont. Opening July 23.

Inspector Gadget—A live-action adventure comedy, based on the cartoon of the same name. With Matthew Broderick, Rupert Everett, and Joely Fisher. Directed by David Kellogg. Opening July 23. (Chelsea Cinemas, Cinema I, East 86th Street Cinemas, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Union Square, and Waverly.)

My Brother, My Sister, Sold for a Fistful of Lire—Basile Sallustio's documentary about an Italian woman's search for her siblings, who were adopted as children and sent to America. In English and Italian. Opening July 21. (Film Forum.)

My Life So Far—A story of growing up in the Scottish highlands, based on the memoir "Son of Adam," by Sir Denis Forman. With Colin Firth, Rosemary Harris, Irene Jacob, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, and Malcolm McDowell. Directed by Hugh Hudson. Opening July 23.

Rosie—A thirteen-year-old with a hyperactive imagination tries to help her mother achieve the happiness that's missing in her life. Directed by Patrice Toye. In Flemish. Opening July 23. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Quad Cinema.)

Trick—Director Jim Falls's comedy about two gay men trying to find a place to be alone together. Opening July 23. (Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, and Village Theatre VII.)

FILM NOTES

(If a movie has been reviewed recently in The Current Cinema, the date of its review is given.)

American Pie—Four senior boys at a Michigan high school decide to end their status as virgins and undergo various erotic adventures—some ridiculous or humiliating, some gratifying—which they then relate to one another. The writer, Adam Herz, and the team of Paul and Chris Weitz (the first directs, the second produces) aim low and score. "American Pie" is often funny (one sequence involving a beautiful foreign-exchange student, a horny boy, and broadcasting over the Internet is classic), but you may come out depressed by it. The coarseness in itself is not offensive, but the notion that privacy couldn't possibly be a value that matters to anyone is. With a bevy of young actors, of whom Chris Klein, as a soft-voiced lacrosse player, is by far the most charming.—*David Denby* (7/12/99) (Chelsea Cinemas, Criterion Center, 84th Street Sixplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, Kips Bay Theatre, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Union Square, and Waverly.)

Arlington Road—Jeff Bridges spends most of this movie looking extremely worried, and so would you if you thought a major American terrorist had moved in across the street. Bridges plays a college lecturer, specializing in terrorism, who befriends a neighbor couple named the Langs (Tim Robbins and an even scarier Joan Cusack); the question is whether they are befriending him back or using him for evil purposes. Mark Pellington's paranoid movie tends to state its intentions too baldly, and his evident desire to contribute to the debate over America's self-inflicted wounds seems like wishful thinking; but the film is undoubtedly creepy (the first ten minutes, in particular, are tough to watch), and most of the shocks strike home. What will divide viewers is the plot; either the ending makes no sense or it forces you to rethink everything that went before. At least the moral of the picture is unambiguous: if you want to live, don't look in other people's mailboxes.—*Anthony Lane* (7/19/99) (Chelsea Cinemas, Criterion Center, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, and Village East Cinemas.)

Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me—A crud classic, featuring the return of Mike Myers as the grinningly fatuous Brit-twit spy. Ostensibly a parody of the Bond movies, the Austin Powers comedies are closer to a celebration of the redeeming power of shamelessness. But there are also lots of depressing scatological jokes, candy-colored mod sets, goony mock-sci-fi scenes, and too many exuberantly bad ideas that wear down fast. Directed by Jay Roach.—*D.D.* (7/5/99) (Cinema II, Cinema 3rd Avenue, Criterion Center, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, and Village Theatre VII.)

The Awful Truth (1937)—A classic screwball comedy, about one of old Hollywood's favorite subjects: the divorced couple who almost bed down with new mates but get back together. Irene Dunne and Cary Grant are the sparring partners, and Ralph Bellamy plays just about the same role he later played in "His Girl Friday." Dunne's way with a quip is to smile brightly and wring it dry, but she's at her best here. Leo McCarey's direction is first-rate; in a memorable sequence toward the end, Grant tries to persuade a door to open without visible assistance.—*Pauline Kael* (Bryant Park; July 26.)

The Bicycle Thief (1949)—This story of a poor man's search for his stolen bicycle is deceptively simple. At first, there is ironic tenderness: humanity observed with compassion but without illusion. Then the search becomes an odyssey of poverty, encompassing much more than the realistic method leads you to expect. And the richness and the enigmas sneak up on you. What is the meaning of the seeress's words? How is it that the hero who is searching for the bicycle thief becomes the bicycle thief? This neorealist classic, directed by Vittorio De Sica and written by Cesare Zavattini, is on just about everybody's list of the greatest films. It isn't a movie that warms you, though; it's a more impersonal great film. In Italian.—*P.K.* (BAM Rose Cinemas; July 22.)

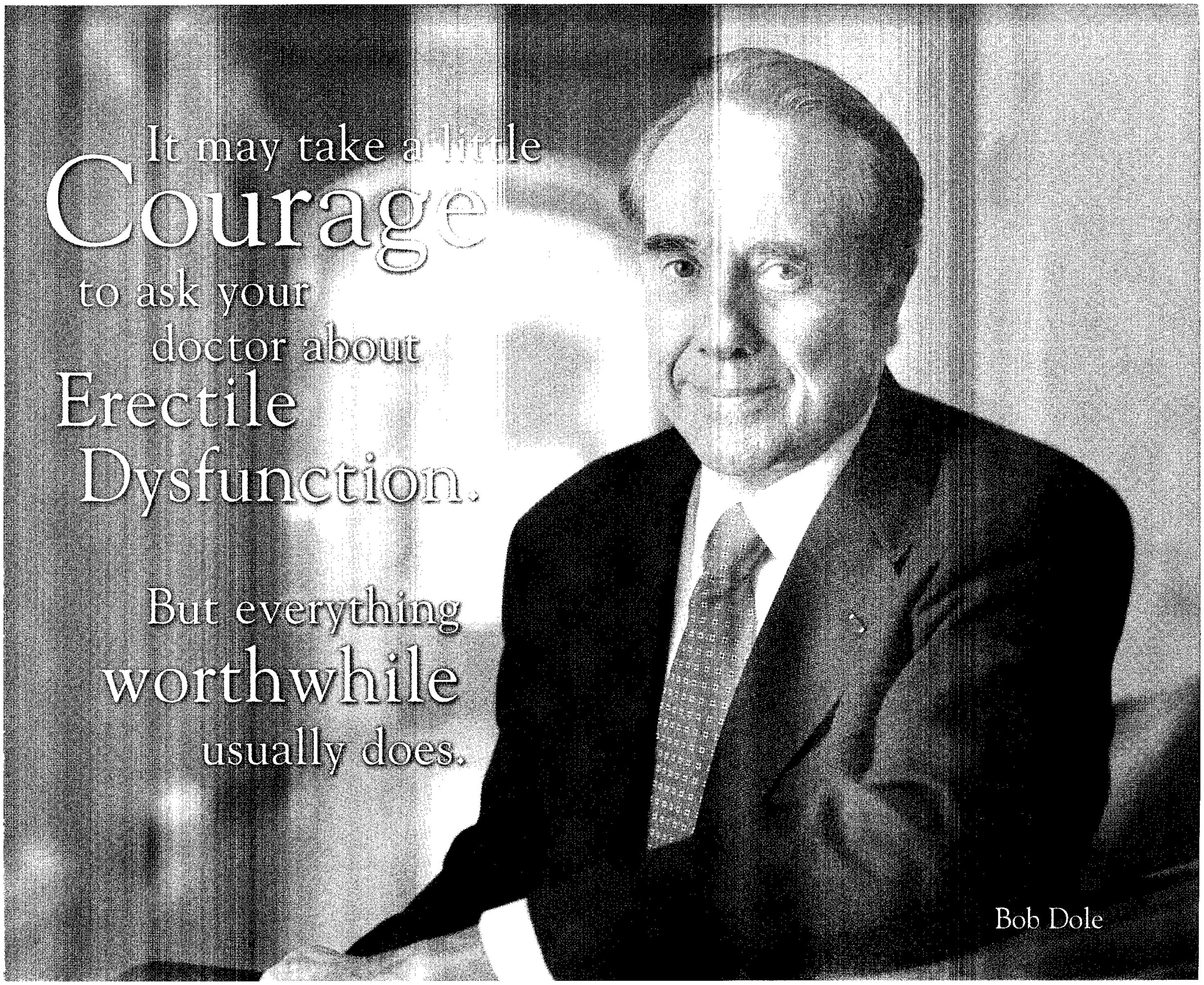
Big Daddy—Anyone looking to solve the mystery of Adam Sandler's mass appeal is not going to do it here. In his latest film, Sandler adopts a little boy to get his girlfriend back, and, of course, each teaches the other lessons about love and responsibility. The tepid movie is supposed to up the ante for Sandler much as "Liar, Liar" did for Jim Carrey (it elevated him from gross-out gag king to warm comic actor). But Sandler lacks any kind of discernible comic energy; he's just meandering around the film waiting for something to happen, and almost nothing funny does.—*Bruce Diones* (Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, Kips Bay Theatre, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, State, Union Square, and Waverly.)

The Blair Witch Project—Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. (Angelika Film Center.)

Buena Vista Social Club—In 1996, the blues guitarist Ry Cooder gathered together some wonderful Cuban musicians in their seventies and eighties for a successful recording project. Two years later, Cooder went back to Cuba, this time accompanied by cameras and the German director Wim Wenders, seeking out the men and women of Cuban music on the

Opening July 23, Matthew Broderick in "Inspector Gadget."

MELINDA BECK



When I was diagnosed with prostate cancer, my first concern was ridding myself of the cancer. But I was also concerned about possible postoperative side effects, like erectile dysfunction (E.D.), often called impotence. So I asked my doctor about treatment options.

I'm speaking out now in the hope that men with E.D. will get proper treatment for a condition that affects millions of men and their partners.

Most E.D. cases are associated with physical conditions or events, like the prostate cancer surgery I underwent. The most common causes of E.D. include diabetes, high blood pressure, spinal cord injury, or surgery for the prostate or colon. E.D. can also be associated with smoking, alcohol abuse, or psychological conditions such as anxiety or stress.

The good news is that many effective treatments are available for E.D. But the important first step is to talk to your doctor. Together, you and your doctor can decide which treatment is best for you.

Now it's up to you to get the treatment you need for E.D. My advice is to get a medical checkup. It's the best way to get educated about E.D. and what can be done to treat it. It may take a little courage, but I've found that everything worthwhile usually does.

For more information about erectile dysfunction, please call 1-800-433-4215.

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GET EDUCATED ABOUT E.D.

Pfizer

streets and in the old dance halls of Havana. The musicians still look great, play beautifully, and exude a stirring seriousness and dignity; the movie comes closer to pure happiness than anything else in the theatres at the moment.—*D.D.* (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Village East Cinemas.)

The Dinner Game—Francis Veber's movie sounds disappointingly courteous; the original French title, "Le Dîner de Cons," is much ruder and certainly closer to the misanthropic spirit of this farce. The premise is as entertaining as you could hope for: every Wednesday a bunch of smart young Parisians hold a dinner, to which each of them must invite a complete idiot. This often entails spending large portions of the week hunting down someone of sufficient inanity; admirers of Flaubert's "Bouvard and Pécuchet" will be thrilled to learn that the encyclopedic French desire to collect fine examples of human folly is alive and well. In this case, Pierre (Thierry Lhermitte) is delighted with his latest catch, Pignon (Jacques Villeret), a spherical buffoon whose principal talent is for making models out of matchsticks. Needless to say, Pierre's plan stumbles when Pignon offers to help him sort out his life. No one could claim that the film is a distinguished contribution to cinema, but it would be churlish to resist its geniality and speed. Based on Veber's own play, and it shows. In French.—*A.L.* (Paris.)

Eyes Wide Shut—Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. (Astor Plaza, Coronet Cinemas, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Olympia, Orpheum VII, and Village Theatre VII.)

Godzilla vs. the Thing (1964; a.k.a. "Godzilla vs. Mothra")—Greedy Japanese capitalists try to turn Mothra's enormous egg, swept from Monster Island during a ferocious storm, into an attraction for sightseers. Mothra's ten-inch-tall twin priestesses, who appear to be dressed for the Monster Island junior prom, protest this exploitation in heartfelt synchronized line readings. Meanwhile, the perennially pissed-off Godzilla goes on the rampage once again. All this is merely a sampling of the risible ingredients in this infectiously silly kiddie-camp spectacle. Inoshiro Honda directed, and his widescreen panache compensates for the rickety special effects.—*Michael Sragow* (Walter Reade Theatre; July 24-25.)

Harold and Maude (1971)—Bud Cort is Harold, a rich, suicidal introvert with a soft, unformed face—he's nineteen but looks younger. Ruth Gordon is poor but spunky Maude, the wizened seventy-nine-year-old woman who's like a cheerleader for Life. She lives in a railway car, would like to change into a sunflower, frets over how to save an ailing tree, prankishly steals vehicles and drives crazily; she advises Harold to "reach out." In this satirical-whimsical romantic comedy, directed by Hal Ashby from a script by Colin Higgins, Harold reaches out by falling in love with Maude, and their love is consummated on the eve of her eightieth birthday. Many young moviegoers of subsequent generations have maintained this eccentric film's cult status; maybe this is partly because of its mixture of the maudlin and the highly sophisticated.—*P.K.* (Film Forum 2; starting July 23.)

I Can't Sleep (1996)—Claire Denis's quiet, terrifying movie failed to create a stir when it first played here; maybe now it will be appreciated as the coolly intelligent antithesis to "Summer of Sam." At the core of the action is the "Granny Killer," who murdered a score of elderly Parisiennes in 1987. But Denis uses the actual events to trace the varieties of alienation, fraternity, and release to be found in the city's eighteenth arrondissement (where the killings took place). Denis focusses on a beautiful girl from Lithuania (Katerina Golubeva) and two brothers from Martinique (Alex Descas as a violinist unhappily married to a Frenchwoman and Richard Courcet as a struggling gay entertainer) who suss out where they fit in their host culture. The horror is not that the center of this society won't hold; it's that there seems to be no center at all. In French.—*M.S.* (Florence Gould Hall; July 27.)

An Ideal Husband—Oscar Wilde's languorous play, newly adapted for the screen by writer and director Oliver Parker. The plot pits dastardly blackmail against upright honor, and one is scandalized, as ever, to find that honor wins the fight. The radiant Mrs. Cheveley (Julianne Moore) turns up in London and unearths a spot of compromising dirt from the past of Sir Robert Chiltern (Jeremy Northam), a tediously unsullied politician. He has a perfect wife (Cate Blanchett), an irritating sister (Minnie Driver), and a friend called Lord Goring (Rupert Everett), who shines like a naughty deed in a good world. So automatic is one's sympathy for Goring, and for Everett's low-toned, cunning performance, that the rest of the story, and most of the cast, feels thin and strained by comparison.—*A.L.* (7/5/99) (Angelika Film Center, Chelsea Cinemas, Gotham Cinema, Kips Bay Theatre, and Lincoln Square.)

The Lovers on the Bridge—Delayed for almost a decade, Leos Carax's long and gloriously infuriating movie has finally made it to these shores. Set around 1989, when France was celebrating the bicentennial of the Revolution, it is mostly set on the Pont-Neuf, the oldest bridge in Paris. Carax can hardly bear to leave the place, and neither can his characters: a tramp called Alex (Denis Lavant) and a half-blind runaway named Michèle (Juliette Binoche). They stumble into love, and their inarticulate affair is expressed in a storm of elemental images: grime, water, fire, and booze. Few films cover such a forbidding distance; Carax starts with handheld shots of the Parisian homeless and gradually rises to the climactic serenity of a waterskiing sequence along the Seine, with fireworks serenading the ecstatic Binoche. Like much of the picture, the scene makes very little sense, but it hooks into Carax's romantic, antisocial provocations, and you aren't going to forget it in a hurry. In French.—*A.L.* (7/19/99) (Film Forum.)

THEATRE ADDRESSES

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(For show times, call 777-FILM, except where noted.)

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St.
Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th St.
Astor Plaza, 44th St. at Broadway.
BAM Rose Cinemas, 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-623-2770).
Beekman, Second Ave. at 66th St.
Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd St.
Chelsea West, 333 W. 23rd St.
Cinema I, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema II, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema 3rd Avenue, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th St. (924-3363).
Coronet Cinemas, Third Ave. at 59th St.
Criterion Center, Broadway at 44th St.
East 85th Street, First Ave. at 85th St.
East 86th Street Cinemas, Third Ave. at 86th St.
Eastside Playhouse, Third Ave. at 55th St.
84th Street Sixplex, Broadway at 84th St.
59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th St.
Film Forum, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110).
First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd St.
Gotham Cinema, Third Ave. at 58th St.
Guild, 33 W. 50th St.
Kips Bay Theatre, Second Ave. at 32nd St.
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, Broadway at 63rd St.
Lincoln Square, Broadway at 68th St.
Metro Cinema 1 and 2, Broadway at 99th St.
Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th St.
New York Twin, Second Ave. at 67th St.
19th Street East 6, Broadway at 19th St.
Olympia I and II, Broadway at 107th St.
Orpheum VII, Third Ave. at 86th St.
Paris, 4 W. 58th St. (688-3800).
Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th St.
Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th St.
The Screening Room, 54 Varick St. (334-2100).
62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd St.
64th and 2nd, Second Ave. at 64th St.
72nd Street East, Third Ave. at 71st St.
State, Broadway at 45th St.
Sutton 1 and 2, Third Ave. at 57th St.
34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th St.
Union Square, Broadway at 13th St.
Village East Cinemas, Second Ave. at 12th St.
Village Theatre VII, Third Ave. at 11th St.
Waverly 1 and 2, Sixth Ave. at 3rd St.
Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between Eighth and Ninth Aves.
Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th St.

My Son the Fanatic—The great Indian actor Om Puri gives a memorable performance as Parvez, a quiet Pakistani taxi-driver living in a dreary northern-England industrial town. For years, the assimilated Parvez has worked to provide for his family, only to have his son suddenly reject Western values and then compound the insult by inviting a group of hungry fundamentalist hangers-on into the house. The writer, Hanif Kureishi, and the director, Udayan Prasad, work the culture clash for comedy and for anguish, too—Parvez, waking up emotionally, falls in love with one of the prostitutes (Rachel Griffiths) he's been driving around, and the fundamentalists, including Parvez's son, go berserk.—*D.D.* (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Rio Grande (1950)—In this John Ford Western, John Wayne is a lieutenant colonel in the cavalry and Maureen O'Hara is his estranged wife, whom he hasn't seen for sixteen years; she arrives at the post he commands because their son (Claude Jarman, Jr.) is among the new recruits there. The action involves an Apache uprising, but the conflict is the emotional one between the colonel's sense of duty and his love of his wife; Wayne and O'Hara are very effective together, so that the viewer deeply wants the final reconciliation.—*P.K.* (American Museum of the Moving Image; July 25.)

South Park: Bigger, Longer & Uncut—Trey Parker and Matt Stone's television-cartoon phenomenon gets a big, splashy, singing-and-dancing, R-rated feature-film début—and it's pretty damn fat-ass funny. Basically a rant against the motion-picture rating system, the movie features more foul language than "Fritz the Cat," and the exploits of Stan, Kyle, Kenny, and Cartman—who are trying to save South Park from a conflicted Devil (his boyfriend, Saddam Hussein, doesn't appreciate him)—are really just an excuse for some wonderful musical numbers that parody both Disney and Broadway.—*B.D.* (East 85th Street, First & 62nd Cinemas, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, State, and Village Theatre VII.)

Star Wars: Episode I—The Phantom Menace—It has been more than twenty years since George Lucas directed a movie. Amid the fuss that has attended his return to the fray, no one seems to have wondered whether he was up to the task. With this film, Lucas demonstrates two facts: one, that he has kept abreast of the recent leaps in special effects, and two, that he hasn't a clue what to do with all the nondigital figures, otherwise known as "people."—*A.L.* (5/24/99) (East 86th Street Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, Olympia, Union Square, and Ziegfeld.)

Summer of Sam—In the sweltering New York summer of 1977, David Berkowitz, the psychotic killer known as Son of Sam, terrorizes the city while, in the Bronx, young Italian-Americans seek pleasure in sex and disco. Spike Lee, working from a screenplay originated by the actor-writers Michael Imperioli and Victor Colicchio, suggests that we are all David Berkowitz—the madness is everywhere. The Italian-Americans, for instance, are killing one another out of fear, ignorance, and intolerance. Slamming different kinds of experience together, Lee tries to do with montage what he cannot do with dramatic logic. John Leguizamo gives a large-scaled, brilliant performance as Vinny, the hairdresser and disco king who cheats on his beautiful wife (Mira Sorvino). With Adrien Brody as Ritchie, who leaves the neighborhood and returns as a bisexual punk rocker with spiked hair.—*D.D.* (7/12/99) (BAM Rose Cinemas, Criterion Center, East 86th Street Cinemas, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Sutton, and Village Theatre VII.)

Tarzan—Raised by apes, the new, animated Tarzan walks with his heavy shoulders leaning forward and his knuckles dragging along the ground. He's the most apelike of Tarzans: animation, which Edgar Rice Burroughs's material seems to have been waiting for, frees the Disney filmmakers to mix animal and human characteristics without embarrassment. This Tarzan doesn't swing from trees but courses rapidly from branch to branch, glen to glen—he treats the tree canopy and the thick undergrowth below as if they were the swells and hollows of the ocean. At its best, the movie is an exhilarating, surf-topping ride. With Minnie Driver providing the voice of a deliciously flirtatious Jane.—*D.D.* (7/5/99) (Chelsea Cinemas, East 86th Street Cinemas, Guild, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Metro Cinema, and Village East Cinemas.... ¶ Cinema I; through July 23.)

Wild Wild West—Gizmos, Gatlings, and wrought-iron whatnots. This piece of overproduced maniacal whimsy is set in the Grant Administration and features a Jules Verne system of design, heavy on gadgetry and industrial fantasy. It's exhausting, utterly without feeling, and pointless—though Will Smith looks great in his Western outfit. Written by six persons who cannot tell a story; directed by Barry Sonnenfeld.—*D.D.* (7/12/99) (Chelsea West, 84th Street Sixplex, Kips Bay Theatre, Metro Cinema, New York Twin, Orpheum VII, State, and Union Square.)

The Wind (1928)—In Victor Sjöström's silent masterpiece of psychological terror, a well-bred Virginia girl (Lillian Gish) goes to Texas to live with her cousin, only to be turned out by his jealous wife and hounded by the men and the wind that pound the countryside. From the opening sequence of a train slicing through the landscape to the climax of a corpse buried in the blowing sand, the film moves like greased lightning. It's a brilliant anti-Western: when the heroine picks up a gun, what happens is both shocking and inevitable. (M-G-M is to blame for the jarring happy ending.) Gish is superb, her emotions unravelling like a frayed hemline.—*M.S.* (Museum of Modern Art; July 22 and July 26.)

ALSO PLAYING

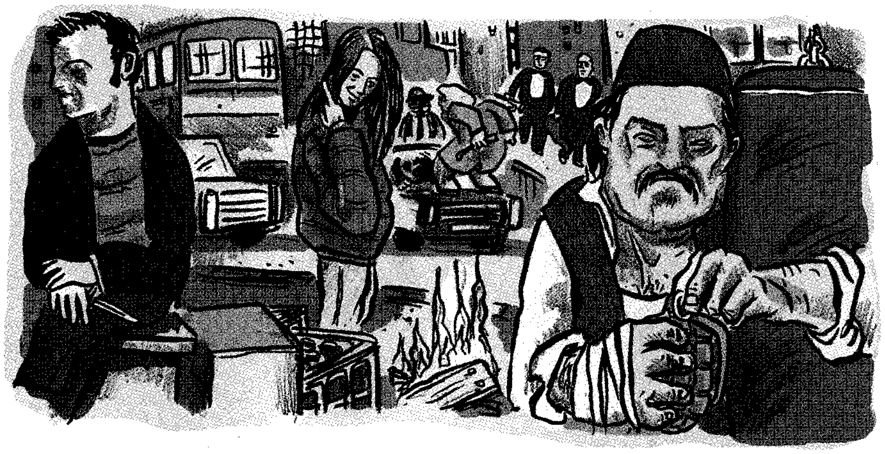
ANALYZE THIS: Worldwide Cinemas.... **AUTUMN TALE:** Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Quad Cinema.... **THE GENERAL'S DAUGHTER:** Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Orpheum VII, 72nd Street East, State, and Village Theatre VII.... **I'M LOSING YOU:** Quad Cinema.... **LAKE PLACID:** Chelsea Cinemas, Criterion Center, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 62nd & Broadway, 64th and 2nd, 34th Street Showplace, and Village East Cinemas.... **LIMBO:** Murray Hill Cinemas.... **THE MATRIX** (4/26 & 5/3/99): Union Square.... **A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM** (5/17/99): Worldwide Cinemas.... **THE MUMMY** (5/10/99): Murray Hill Cinemas.... **MUPPETS FROM SPACE:** Chelsea West, Criterion Center, East 86th Street Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, and Union Square.... **NOTTING HILL** (6/7/99): Art Greenwich Twin, New York Twin, and 34th Street Showplace..... **THE RED VIOLIN** (6/14/99): BAM Rose Cinemas, Beekman, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, 34th Street Showplace, and Union Square.... **RUN LOLA RUN:** Angelika Film Center, Chelsea Cinemas, Eastside Playhouse, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.... **RUSHMORE** (12/7-14/98): Worldwide Cinemas.... **SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE** (12/21/98): Worldwide Cinemas.... **TEA WITH MUSSOLINI:** Chelsea Cinemas, 59th Street East Cinema, and The Screening Room.... **THE THIRTEENTH FLOOR:** Worldwide Cinemas.... **THE VELOCITY OF GARY** ** **(NOT HIS REAL NAME):** Art Greenwich Twin.... **THE WINSLOW BOY** (5/17/99): Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.... **THE WOOD:** Criterion Center, 84th Street Sixplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, Kips Bay Theatre, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, and Village Theatre VII.

REVIVALS, CLASSICS, ETC.

(Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.)

Film Forum 2, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110)—July 21-22: "The Tarnished Angels" (1957, Douglas Sirk).... From July 23: "Harold and Maude" (†).

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—A program of films significant to the development of cinema but not currently in the museum's collection. July 22 at 2:30 and July 23 at 6: "The Unknown" (1927, Tod Browning; silent)....July 22 at 6 and July 26 at 2:30: "The Wind" (†)....July 23 at 2:30: "Mister Roberts" (1955, John Ford and Mervyn LeRoy)....July 23 at 8 and July 24 at 2: "Dinner at Eight" (1933, George Cukor)....July 24 at 5 and July 27 at 2:30: "The Palm Beach Story" (1942, Cukor)....July 25 at 2 and July 26 at 6: "The Magnificent Ambersons" (1942, Orson Welles)....July 25 at 5: "Bringing Up Baby" (1938, Howard Hawks)....July 27 at 6: "Night of the Hunter" (1955, Charles Laughton).... ¶ A program of films directed by Márta Mészáros. July 22 at 3: "Diary for My Loves" (1987, in Hungarian)....July 22 at 6 and July 25 at 1: "Diary for My Children" (1982; in Hungarian). Ms. Mészáros will be present on July 22....July 23 at 2:30: "Adoption" (1975; in Hungarian)....July 23 at 6: "Just Like at Home" (1978; in Hungarian). Ms. Mészáros will be present....July 23 at 8: "Daughter of Luck" (1999; in Russian and Polish). Ms. Mészáros will be present....July 24 at 2:30: "The Girl" (1968; in Hungarian)....July 24 at 5: "Nine Months" (1976; in Hungarian)....July 25 at 5:30: "Diary for My Father and Mother" (1990; in Hungarian)....July 26 at 6: "Bye Bye Red Riding Hood" (1989; in Hungarian)....July 27 at 6: "The Two of Them/Women" (1975; in Hungarian).



Opening July 23, Goran Paskaljevic's "Cabaret Balkan."

RUSSELL CHRISTIAN

Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center (875-5600)—Through July 22: The New York Video Festival.... ¶ A program of films directed by Claude Chabrol; in French, with English subtitles. July 23 at 1 and 5:30 and July 24 at 6:20: "The Unfaithful Wife" (1968)....July 23 at 3:15 and 7:45 and July 24 at 4:15 and 8:30: "Just Before Nightfall" (1971)....July 25 at 4 and 8:45 and July 26 at 6:30: "Handsome Serge" (1958)....July 25 at 6:15 and July 26 at 4 and 8:30: "The Cousins" (1959).... ¶ July 24-25 at 2: "Godzilla vs. the Thing" (†).

BAM Rose Cinemas, 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-623-2770)—July 21 at 4, 6:45, and 9:20: "The Band Wagon" (1953, Vincente Minnelli).... ¶ July 22 at 4, 6:45, and 9:20: "The Bicycle Thief" (†).... ¶ A program of films by Spike Lee. July 23 at 4, 6:45, and 9:20: "4 Little Girls" (1997)....July 24 at 1:30, 4, 6:45, and 9:20: "He Got Game" (1998)....July 25 at 1:30, 4, 6:45, and 9:20: "Get on the Bus" (1996).... ¶ July 26 at 4, 6:45, and 9:20: "The Killing" (1956, Stanley Kubrick).... ¶ July 27 at 4, 6:45, and 9:20: "Platinum Blonde" (1931, Frank Capra).

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—A program of John Ford Westerns. July 24 at 2: "Fort Apache" (1948)....July 24 at 4:30: "Wagon Master" (1950)....July 25 at 2: "She Wore a Yellow Ribbon" (1949).... July 25 at 4: "Rio Grande" (†).

The 22nd Asian American International Film Festival—Two weekends (July 23-25 and July 30-31) of new films from Korea, the United States, the Philippines, Japan, Canada, and Hong Kong. (Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. For information, call 925-6014.)

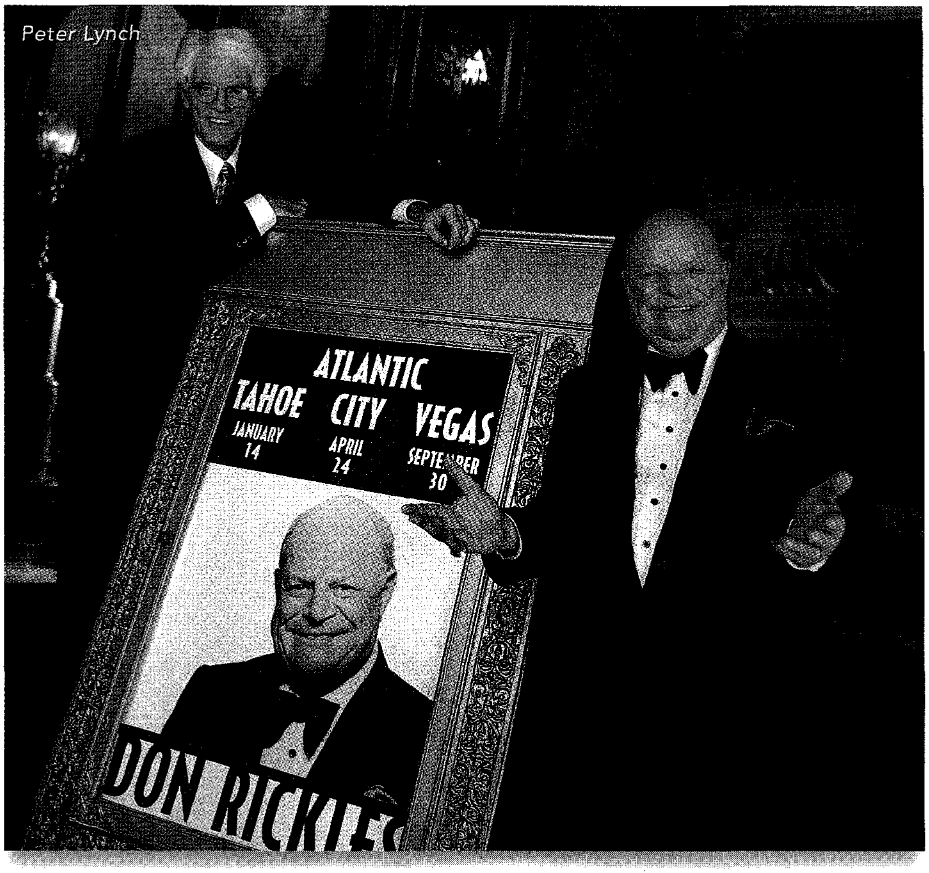
Bryant Park, Sixth Ave. at 42nd St.—Mondays, starting at dusk: free drive-in-style moviegoing, beginning with coming attractions, trailers, and cartoons. The feature on July 26 will be "The Awful Truth" (†). (For rain-date information, call 512-5700.)

Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—July 27 at 12:30, 3:30, and 6:30: "Adieu Philippine" (1961, Jacques Rozier; in French)....July 27 at 9: "I Can't Sleep" (†).

A Different Light Bookstore, 151 W. 19th St. (989-4850)—A Sunday-night series of free films (and popcorn). On July 25 at 7, the feature will be "The Wiz" (1978, Sidney Lumet).

Anthology Film Archives, 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5110)—July 21 at 6:30, July 22 at 7, July 23 at 5, July 24 at 9, July 25 at 7, and July 26-27 at 8: "The Thing Called Love" (1993, Peter Bogdanovich)....July 22 at 8 and 10 and July 24 at 6: "Duet for Cannibals" (1968, Susan Sontag; in Swedish)....July 23 at 6 and July 24 at 2 and 4:30: "Red Desert" (1964, Michelangelo Antonioni)....July 23 at 8:30: "Brother Carl" (1969, Sontag)....July 24 at 7 and July 25 at 2 and 4: "Il Bell'Antonio" (1962, Mauro Bolognini; in Italian)....July 24 at 8:15: "Unguided Tour" (1983, Sontag)....July 25 at 6 and 8: "Promised Lands" (1974, Sontag).

Films on the Piers—Films made in New York City are being shown (free, with free popcorn) on two of the city piers. "West Side Story" (1961, Robert Wise and Jerome Robbins): July 21 at 8:30 on Pier 54 (at 13th Street) and July 23 at 8:30 on Pier 25 (at North Moore Street). (There are no rain dates.)



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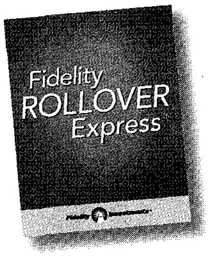

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THE
NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

COMMENT

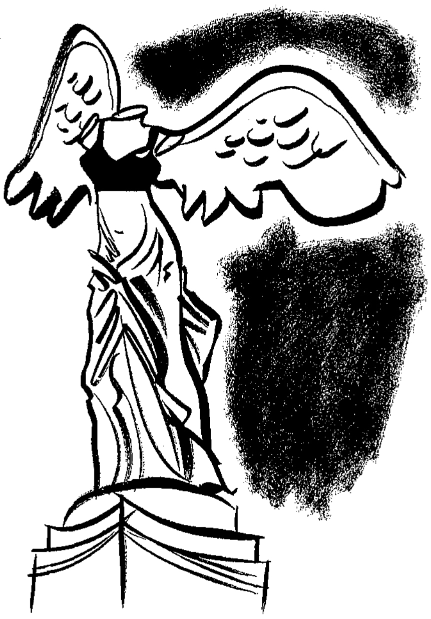
Exposure.

LAST Tuesday, at a press conference at Niketown, on Fifty-seventh Street, Brandi (Hollywood) Chastain, the shirt-doffing heroine of the United States women's soccer team, looked taken aback when she was asked whether she considered herself a sex symbol. "I'm not sure what that means," she said, before allowing that she might indeed be one "if it means feeling good about yourself, confident, wanting to share with other people."

Actually, that's not what it means, as the readers of *Gear* magazine's recent "Sex Issue," in which she posed, naked and oiled, would happily explain to her. Chastain's wholesome reply was, however, in keeping with her post-game insistence that stripping down to her sports bra, which bore the Nike swoosh, was the product of uninhibited exuberance rather than premeditated exhibitionism. "I don't even remember taking it off, to be honest," she said at the press conference. But it doesn't really matter whether the gesture was calculated or not, because it has already taken on its own life. In Chastain's move (carelessly squandered by ABC, which failed to cut to the money shot and instead lingered over the ball rolling around in the net) there was the merging of two familiar but incongruent images—Sports Figure Takes Top Off and Girl Takes Top Off—and it is in the peculiar meeting of these two that Chastain's instant celebrity was generated.

When it comes to the category of Sports Figure Takes Top Off, there is ample precedent for Chastain's victory strip, particularly among male soccer players, for whom disrobing amounts to an international language. The most celebrated shirt-twirling in recent soccer history was in the English F.A. Challenge Cup semifinals this year, when Ryan Giggs, a winger for Manchester United, whipped his shirt off after scoring what some commentators called the greatest goal of all time. FIFA, soccer's governing body, frowns on shirt-shedding, and players are occasionally yellow-carded, or worse, for sartorial infractions. Back in 1989, Eric Cantona, the French star player, threw his shirt in anger at a referee—hardly a Sprewellian offense, but it got him suspended from his team, Marseille. In 1995, one Jonathan Smith, a British player in the minor divisions, apparently felt, after scoring, that taking his shirt off would be insufficiently celebratory, so he ripped off his shorts instead. (He was fined all of six pounds, which suggests that gormlessness is indulged where hotheadedness is not.)

Girl Takes Top Off, though, is freighted with an entirely different symbolic weight: in the usual course of events, if you want to be pictured on the cover of *Sports Illustrated* in your bra, as Chastain was this week, you have to arrange to be Tyra Banks. The image of Chastain, of course, wasn't so revealing—Nike's Inner Actives sports bra is a sturdy piece of engineering which exposes very little bosom. The frisson lay in the very act of stripping, which is usually more connotative of lap dancing than victory laps. Strategic apparel removal has become a standard promotional ploy for female stars from Drew Barrymore, whose striptease on "Letterman" set the paradigm of contemporary toplessness, to Nicole Kidman, on the cover of *Time.* The last reported case of innocent breast-baring took place circa Woodstock, 1969; a recurrence is not expected at the festival's upcoming thirtieth-anniversary celebration. (Nudity, Woodstock '99 style, is likely to have less to do with peace and love than with flogging merchandise: consider the example of one performer on the bill—Alanis Morissette, who took it all off for a recent video.)



Brandi Chastain professed, at Tuesday's press conference, not to understand the feverish discussion of her sudden marketability, and said, concerning the game, that female soccer players "have a responsibility to insure that it stays as pure as it began"—an outcome the team might have stood a chance of guaranteeing if it had only taken the trouble to lose. "I just lifted off all the burdens, all the obligations, all the worries," Chastain said of her ecstatic moment of consummation. But, having also lifted off a No. 6 jersey, Chastain changed her value both with the public and in the marketplace, because who can resist a vision of triumph with peerless pecs? No one since the ancient Greeks, who piously depicted the goddess Victory with a breast bared. Her name, of course, was Nike.

—REBECCA MEAD

ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM BACHTELL

ARM'S LENGTH DEPT.

Sam Dash speaks out on what we won't be hearing about Hillary.

SUPPORTERS of Hillary Clinton's burgeoning Senate campaign have been crossing their fingers about a certain report that allegedly will issue from Ken Starr's office sometime during the next several months. The report, which some news accounts are predicting will be "blistering," is purported to sum up Starr's investigation of the Whitewater affair and, in the process, reveal material that could be particularly damaging to Mrs. Clinton. But, as it turns out, the Clinton camp may have very little to worry about. Sam Dash, in the first interview he has granted since he abruptly resigned as ethics adviser to the Office of the Independent Counsel, last November, said that, based on his firsthand review of the evidence collected against Mrs. Clinton, he has concluded that there is no credible information of any criminal misconduct on her part. Moreover, Dash says, a majority of Starr's prosecutorial staff came to that same conclusion.

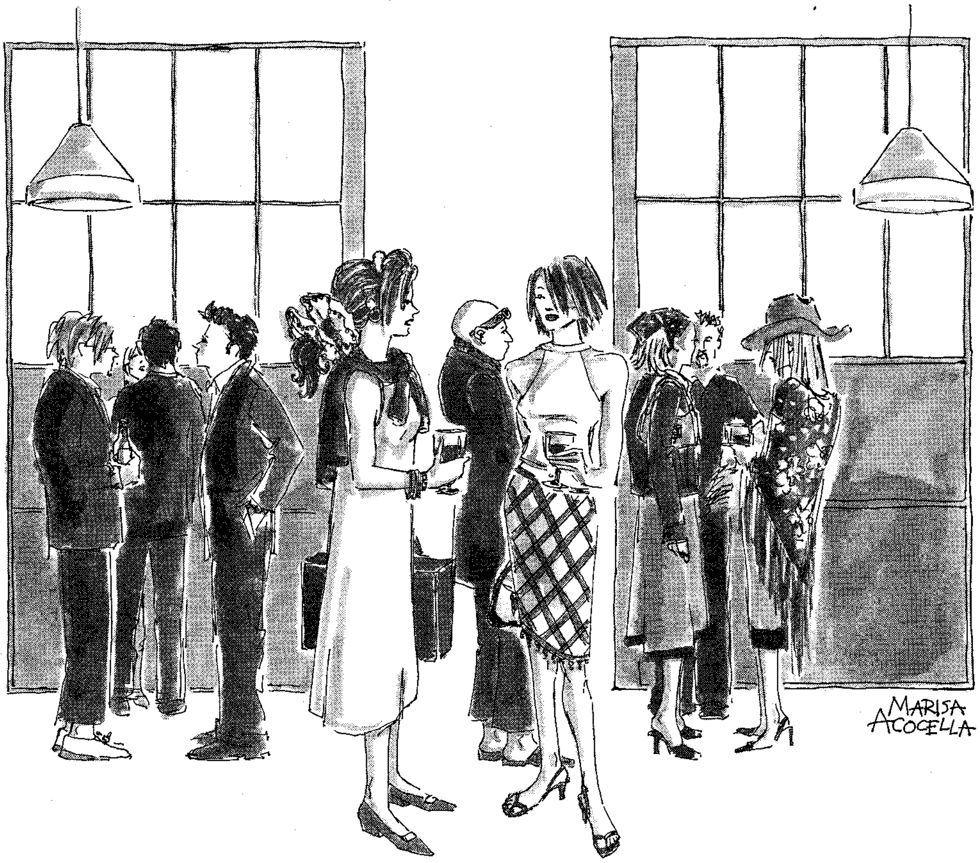
According to Dash, W. Hickman Ewing, Jr., Starr's relentless deputy in Arkansas, submitted to Starr's staff in late 1996 a "very thick prosecution memo" advocating a federal grand-jury indictment of Mrs. Clinton. Attached to that memorandum was a draft of the proposed indictment. The prosecution memorandum was dissected at a meeting attended by Starr, Ewing, Dash, and most of the rest of Starr's prosecutorial staff. At the meeting, Dash told me, he made it clear that he thought the proposed indictment had little merit: "It was pulling together facts that didn't follow one another. . . . It was speculation. There wasn't one actual piece of evidence that would support serious consideration for indictment. It was like one plus one equals five. No reputable prosecutor would ever bring such an indictment."

According to two people who spoke to Ewing, he was privately furious at Dash's blunt criticism and noted that Dash was a lifelong Democrat and had served as chief counsel of the Senate Watergate committee. But Dash's former colleagues hardly recall him as being protective of the President and the First Lady. One of them told me that Dash, as an editor of Starr's impeachment referral to the House of Representatives, had urged the prosecutors to "adopt an advocative tone," one that was "harsh and hard-hitting" in describing the conduct of the President.

More important, three other members of Starr's staff corroborated Dash's account. "There was a virtual unanimity among the professional staff that 'there was no there there' and it would have been foolhardy to bring such an indictment," one official recalled. "The only support that there was for bringing the charges was by Ewing—who drafted them—and by one or two of the other 'true believers' within the office."

Of course, just because the proposed indictment proves no criminality doesn't mean that Mrs. Clinton didn't behave badly. One investigator who reviewed Ewing's prosecution memo said, regarding Whitewater-related work that Mrs. Clinton performed as a lawyer, "You could make a compelling argument that the evidence showed that Mrs. Clinton misled federal banking regulators and misled a federal grand jury. But her motivation appeared to be to conduct political damage control, not to cover up any criminality. She cut some ethical corners."

In the end, what prompted Dash's resignation was Starr's decision to testify as, in Dash's words, an "aggressive advocate" of impeachment before the House Judiciary Committee. "Starr always publicly said that Sam Dash had reviewed this and approved that," Dash said, "so he was constantly putting me out there. And in many cases it was true. But I couldn't keep quiet when he was doing something that I disagreed with, because the inference would be that . . . I was approving things. So I made it clear that I wasn't going to let my name stand behind actions that I thought were illegal or unethical." —MURRAY S. WAAS



"Don't get me wrong. I think the morning-after pill is great. It's just that right now my problem is lining up something for the night before."

HOMEOWNER'S CHECKLIST

FROM: Chanticleer-by-the-Sea Real Estate, Inc., Sea Cove, New Jersey
To: All Owners of Summer Rental Properties

SUMMER is upon us once again, and soon renters will have the privilege of spending a few precious weeks in your home, creating memories that will last a lifetime. In order to provide them with the kind of summer-rental experience that they have come to expect from a Chanticleer-by-the-Sea property, we have compiled the following checklist. Please make certain that you have completed the following tasks—and thanks again for renting out your wonderful home with Chanticleer!

1. In kitchen, provide twenty Tupperware tubs and twenty Rubbermaid lids. Important: Remove all slotted spoons, colanders, and any gadgets involved in the preparation of meals.

2. Most renters, of course, will be spending long days at the beach, which means sand, sand, and more sand! Make sure that the water supply to the outdoor shower stall has been properly disconnected.

3. Remember to leave at least one continuously buzzing appliance behind a locked door.

4. On a pad of paper next to the phone, write a note that reads, "Under no circumstances accept collect calls from a person calling himself Rico."

5. Reminder: Provide strongly worded warnings about the use of the gas grill which will intimidate renters from going anywhere near it.

6. Leave your renters a lot of intriguing yet contradictory clues as to how you made your money.

7. Remember, New Jersey law permits homeowners who rent their properties in the summer to lock up over ninety per cent of all available closets. However, it is thoughtful to leave Post-its indicating available kitchen drawers in which renters may store their dresses and suits.

8. In the middle of your renters' stay, try to remember to place a collect call to your home using the name Rico.

9. Please leave your renters detailed instructions about how to reset the water heater. Important: Omit last page!

10. In three different locations, post completely different, impossible-to-reconcile recycling schedules. (Note: Hide bins.)

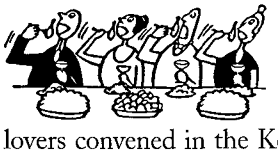
11. Toward the end of their stay, remember to send renters a postcard reading, "Scumbags: Pick up the damn phone, or else!!! —Rico."

12. One final check: Have you removed the coolant from your air-conditioners?

We hope these last-minute touches won't take up too much of your time. Thanks again—and enjoy your summer in the South of France! —ANDY BOROWITZ

TABLE TALK

A clean-plate club for the intrepid.



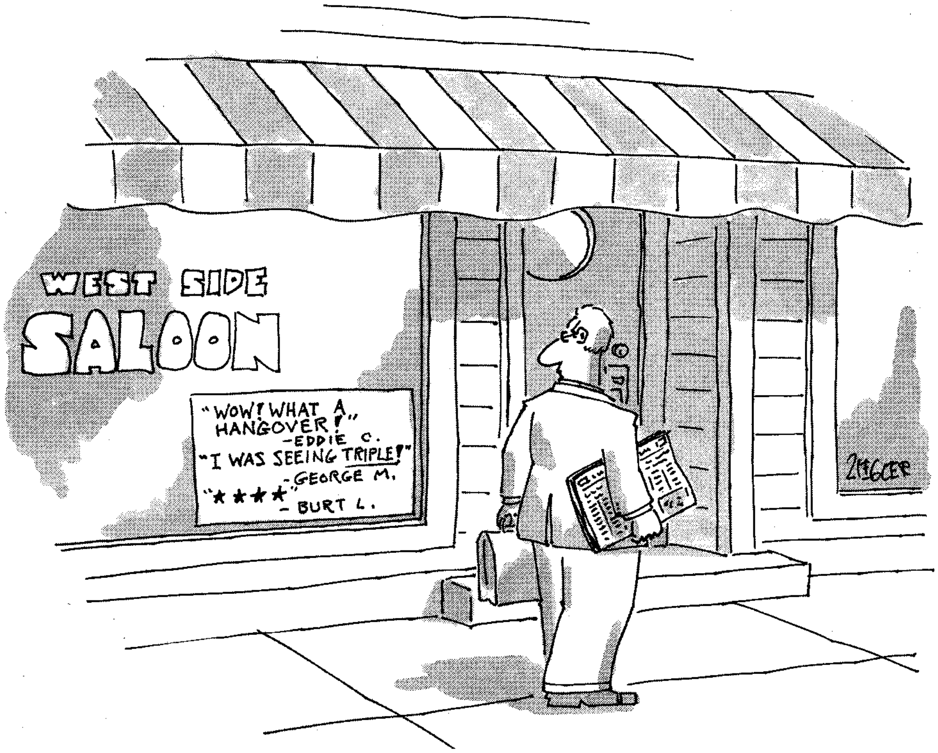
ON a recent warm evening, five New York food lovers convened in the Kensington section of Brooklyn to sample something called "jiz-biz." The group, who call themselves the Innard Circle, met at Nostalgia, one of the few restaurants in the city which serve this Azerbaijani lamb delicacy, consisting of French fries tossed with liver, heart, and kidneys. After the group was seated, Melissa Easton, an industrial designer, explained that the Innard Circle—also known among group members as the Organ Meat Society or the Offal Truth—was born at a dinner party when she spied Marisa Bowe, the editor of the on-line magazine *Word*, eagerly devouring a piece of beef tendon. "You just don't meet many women who eat stuff like that," Easton said. "I knew I'd found a kindred spirit." Bowe and Easton agreed to meet once a month to indulge their passion for what is sometimes called "the fifth quarter of the cow," and they invited some of their more intrepid friends: Robert Sietsema, a *Village Voice* food critic; Becky Okrent, a food writer; and Becky's husband, Dan, an editor-at-large at Time Inc.

Because most New York diners are on the timid side, restaurant menus often indicate organ-meat dishes with euphemisms ("variety meats" is the favorite circumlocution) or leave them off entirely, forcing adventurous eaters to get aggressive. For the Innard Circle's previous meeting, at La Lunchonette, a French bistro just north of the meat-packing district, Easton called in advance to request a special menu: slices of foie-gras pâté, sweetbreads in a creamy vinaigrette with lemon and capers, calf's liver in red-wine sauce, and the house specialty, brains in black butter.

At Nostalgia, Sietsema, the son of a chemist who formulated snack-food flavors for Frito-Lay, took charge, ordering tongue with peas, skewers of liver and chicken, and the much-anticipated jiz-biz. While they waited, the group's members reflected on why they are drawn to innards. Dan Okrent believes his cravings come from his early experiences with tongue at his Polish-Jewish grandmother's dinner table; Bowe credits her love to her Yugoslavian-born, Argentine-bred mother, who served her children bone marrow on toast. "I have two theories about why people eat innards," Bowe said. "First, there are adventure-eaters who play a game of gastronomical 'chicken,' where the weirder the dish is, the better. The second group isn't competitive. They're just vampires like me who crave the stuff."

As a garlicky salad was passed around the table, Bowe continued, "One thing I love about innards is that they remind me of little machines, like the computer I use every day. They are sort of like microprocessors that you can actually eat." So far that week, Bowe had already eaten tripe soup twice and brains (at Café Loup) once—which wouldn't be notable except for the fact that it was only Wednesday. Okrent, who had just returned from a health spa, said that he tried to be a little more temperate. "Organ meat is sort of like organ music. Great at first, but too much of it will probably kill you," he said.

After polishing off heaping plates of jiz-biz (the name, unlike the ingredients, remained a mystery), the group decided to end the evening at Bukhara, a twenty-

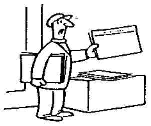

WEST SIDE
SALOON
"WOW! WHAT A HANGOVER!" -EDDIE C.
"I WAS SEEING TRIPLE!" -GEORGE M.
"★★★★" - BURT L.

four-hour Pakistani restaurant on Coney Island Avenue which is known for its curried brains. While nibbling at the dish, which looks like scrambled eggs in a light tomato-and-chili masala, they tossed around possible venues for their next meeting. The St. Andrews for haggis? A Uruguayan barbecue joint that specializes in blood sausage? A *churrascaria* in Corona that serves skewered chicken hearts the size of marbles?

As the plates were cleared, the group puzzled over the paradox that brought the Innard Circle together in the first place: Why do so many people find this delicious food so unappetizing? "Most Americans want meat that has no resemblance to the animal it comes from," Sietsema suggested. "A steak doesn't look like a cow, but a kidney looks a lot like a kidney." —ROBERT S. BOYNTON

INK

Holy expensive hovel! "Batman" helmer demands his privacy!



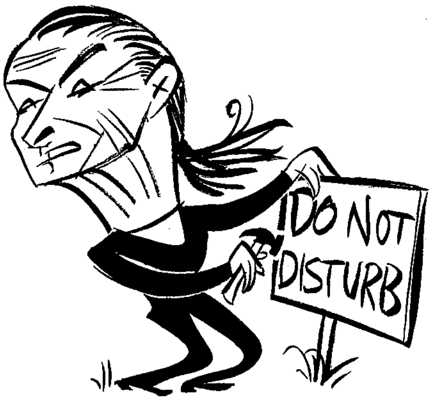
ROSEMARIE FANUCCHI, the sixty-one-year-old publisher and editor of the *Coastal View News*, puts out her weekly paper from a one-room office in the sleepy flower-and-avocado-growing community of Carpinteria, California, at the southern tip of Santa Barbara County. Fanucchi has ocean-blue eyes and wears a large, fanciful ribbon in her hair. She describes the readers of the *Coastal View*, which is distributed free, as people who "want to know how Aunt Mabel is doing after she fell and broke her ankle and then went off and visited Uncle Jack in Minnesota." So it's not hard to imagine how startled Fanucchi was the other day when she received a threatening, five-page letter from a Century City law firm.

The lawyer was upset about a barn. Two months ago, Fanucchi noticed a little story in another local paper concerning an eighteenth-century post-and-beam barn in central Maine that had been dismantled and was being shipped out to Santa Barbara. She ran a fifteen-line item in her own column, "Sea Shells," concluding that "the barn turned house will live on property . . . right in Carpinteria's back yard." The notice, sandwiched between blurbs on the town's trash problem and a local couple's pride in their niece who was graduating from Stanford University, mentioned neither the barn's owner nor its exact address.

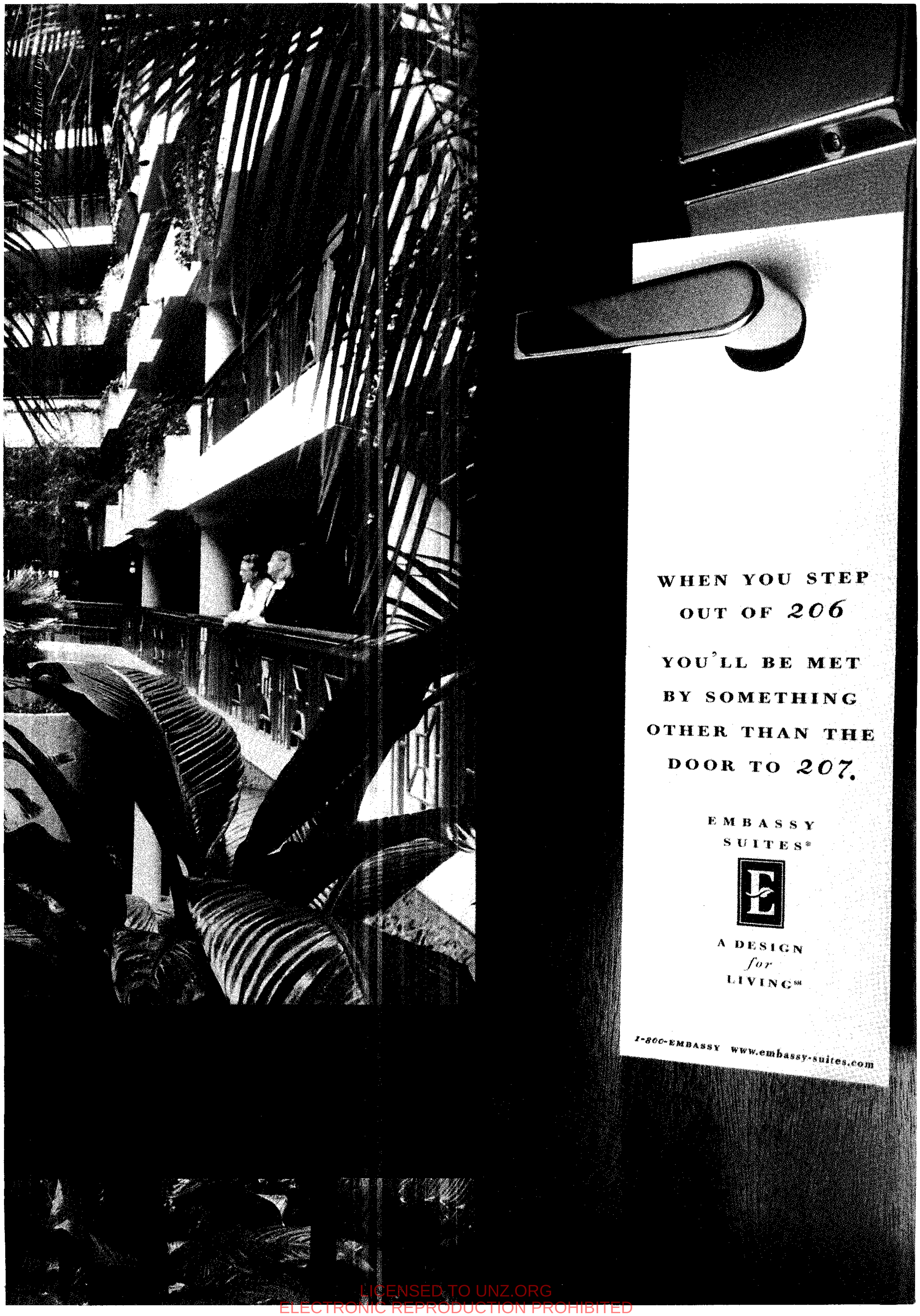
So how did the barn item cause such grave offense? The legal letter Fanucchi received warned that she would be well advised "to refrain from the dissemination of any further information directly or indirectly identifying the whereabouts" of the historic barn. "My client routinely goes to great lengths to ensure that he cannot be easily located by overzealous 'fans' and/or dangerous persons," the letter stated. "[His] mere awareness that this information may be widely disseminated in the *Carpenteria Coastal View* will create substantial emotional distress and an irrevocable loss of tranquility, well-being and privacy." The letter identified the client as Joel Schumacher, the director of two "Batman" sequels.

"I knew someone was trying to threaten me, but I had never heard of Joel Schumacher," Fanucchi said the other day. "So I asked my partner, Michael VanStry, 'Who is Joel Schumacher?' And he says, 'I don't know, but I think he's a jockey,' and he looked it up in the *Farmer's Almanac*, but it turns out he was thinking of Willie Shoemaker."

A week later, she still hadn't figured it out. "I'm not afraid of Phil Schuman," she told a neighbor who stopped by to console her. "He probably spent three thousand dollars having his lawyer write that letter." In any case, being a town elder concerned for the maintenance of civility in the community, Fanucchi wrote a letter to Schumacher's lawyer, assuring him that she had no wish to "invade [the] solitude" of his client—whoever he was. However, she did gently suggest that he try not to misspell the town's name—"spelled Carpinteria not Carpenteria"—should he write to her again. —ANN LOUISE BARDACH



Joel Schumacher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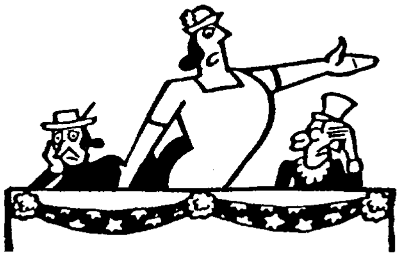


THE CAMPAIGN

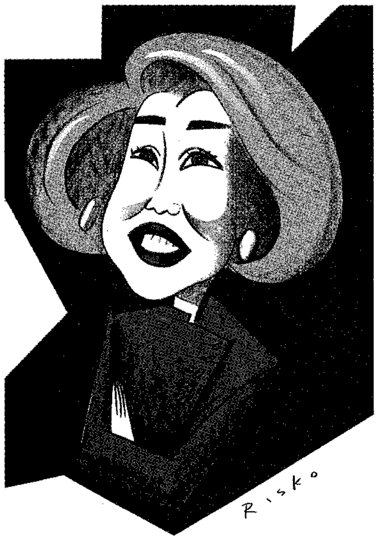
Desperately seeking swagger.

ON a breezy Monday morning in July, with triumphant images of the United States women's soccer team gracing the covers of both *Time* and *Newsweek*, Elizabeth Dole was in Des Moines, and having trouble with her microphone. "Well, I think I can probably project well enough without the mike. So let's just—go for it!" she said, balling a fist and playfully punching the air at the American Institute of Business, a small college attended mostly by women. Dole was more casually done up than usual, in a black cotton dress with a flounced skirt. "I just got off the phone with Team USA," she said, cutting directly to the chase. "I told them, 'You've made history, and I hope there's more history to be made this year.' "

Attaching oneself to a successful sports team is an ancient, and sometimes even effective, political tactic. (John Lindsay's desperate embrace of the 1969 New York Mets may have saved his mayoral campaign that year). And Dole's campaign is attracting interest from the same sorts of people as the soccer team did. Her crowds, which are larger than any other Republican's (except, perhaps, those drawn by George W. Bush), are primarily composed of women, especially young women, and often—quite movingly—mothers and daughters. "She's an inspiration for girls," said Cindy Watson Pottebaum, a science teacher—and a political independent—who attended a Dole meeting in Winterset, Iowa, with her two teen-age daughters. "This is something we've actually talked about around the dinner table. It would be neat to have a woman President."

Winterset is one of the more self-conscious places in Iowa: the seat of Madison County, as in "The Bridges of . . . ," and also the birthplace of John Wayne. Dole spoke in the local historical museum, one of those new buildings that attempt to seem old, with cathedral ceilings and a big stone fireplace. The crowd included many elderly women, which is unusual for a Dole event; a blizzard of blue-gray permanent waves, they radiated the starched, sweet propriety of a Temperance Union meeting. "July 12, 1999, will go down in the annals of Winterset," announced Wanda Lohr, introducing the candidate, "because in November of the year 2000 Elizabeth Dole will be elected the first woman President of the United States."

There was an audible gasp, and proud applause. But then the candidate got up to speak and, ever so slowly, the mood dissipated. After the requisite funny story—a rather convoluted one about her husband's home town of Russell, Kansas—Dole launched into a stupefying account of a recent nine-day campaign trip. She went through every stop: Boston, where it was freezing; Minneapolis; Milwaukee; Cincinnati; Des Moines, for the Pork Expo (and a discursive précis of her speech about the farm crisis). "I was living out of one little suitcase and one hanging bag." She paused, tilted her head, and said, with a solicitous, Blanche DuBois laugh, "The women in the audience can appreciate how difficult that is."



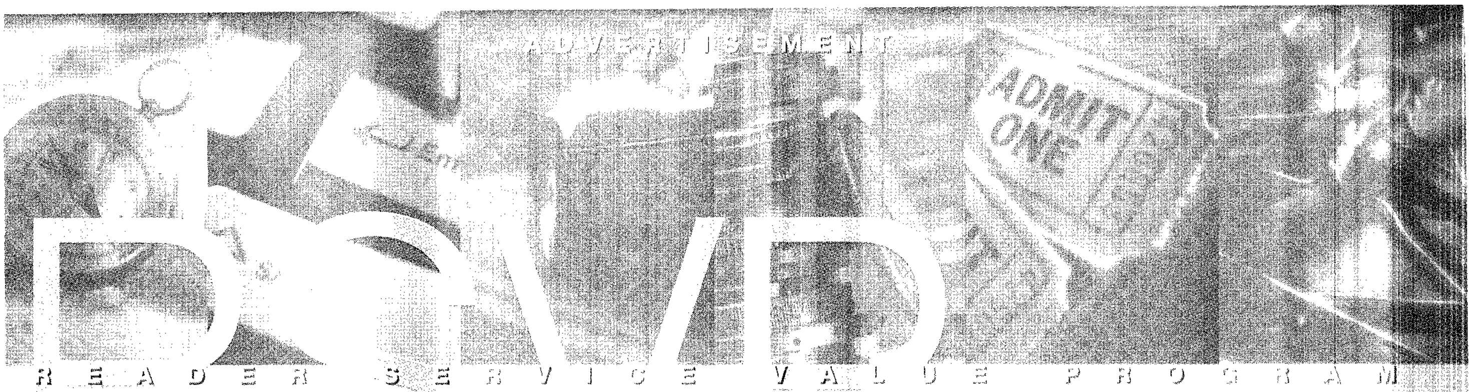
But her trip was only half done! On to Florida for a health-care conference. Then to California for a fund-raiser and a visit to Silicon Valley. "Well," Dole sighed, haltingly, as if she'd just realized how wildly she had careered off course. "I just wanted to give you a sense of the time zones and temperatures and the different sorts of issues that we have to deal with out on the campaign trail."

How sad, and unexpected. If Elizabeth Dole is famous for anything, it is a finicky perfectionism—and yet her campaign appearances, at least on the day I followed her about, were a mess. She talked and talked, never giving the same speech twice, never offering a new idea or a felicitous phrase. Most of her efforts were more coherent than the travelogue in Winterset, but she was always a bit uncertain—daunted, perhaps, by all those hopeful female faces, and very, very desperate to please. Indeed, she lacked the very quality that she'd begun the day celebrating: the swagger of the U.S. women's soccer team. "Whee!" she said, at the end of a thirty-five-minute stemwinder in Ames, her last speech of the day. "I'm out of breath."

Ames will be the site of a suddenly crucial straw poll on August 14th—the only time that the various Republican candidates, most of whom are withering in Bush's shadow, will be able to demonstrate their relative strength as challengers before actual primaries begin, next February. Failure to finish among the top three or four might well doom the candidacies of Lamar Alexander, Dan Quayle, and Pat Buchanan. Dole is vulnerable, too.

Steve Forbes, whose fortune insulates him from the vagaries of straw polling, appeared in Ames as Dole was leaving and attracted about half as many people for breakfast (eighty) as Dole had the evening before. But Forbes's audience was mostly political veterans—the sort of conservative activists who'd noted the date of the straw poll on their calendars months ago—and the candidate worked them with demonic focus. He delivered a sleek, substantive stump speech, then turned the podium over to Steve Grubbs, a former chairman of the Republican Party of Iowa, who practically begged the attendees to sign on as Forbes supporters. (Gold and silver pins, T-shirts, and an entertainment tent at the straw poll were offered as inducements, as well as the opportunity to meet "many of your favorite national media personalities, who will be covering the event live!") After a day with Dole, I found the unironic and rather blustery maleness of this pitch both startling and invigorating. It also seemed to work.

—JOE KLEIN



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THE POLITICAL SCENE

THE PRESIDENT'S PEN PAL

Over a fifty-year correspondence, Ronald Reagan told a fan from Philadelphia almost everything.

BY DOUGLAS BRINKLEY

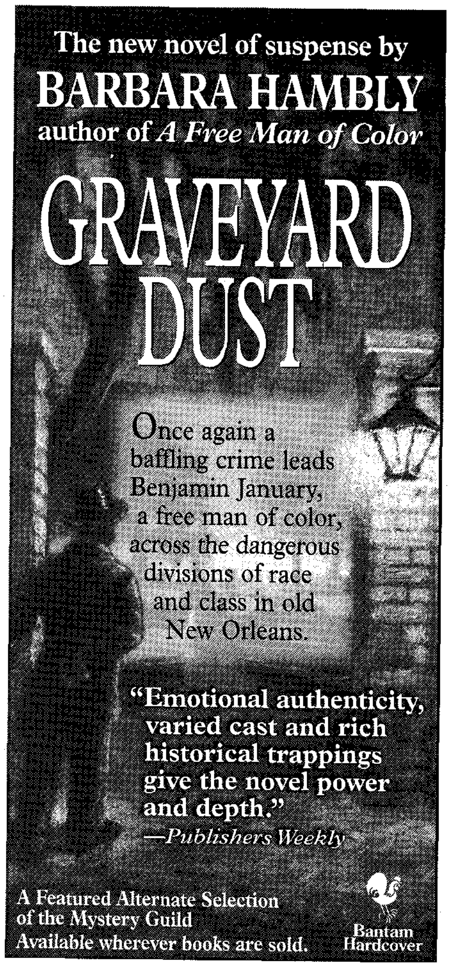
SPENDING a Sunday afternoon with Lorraine Makler Wagner, in her two-story, semidetached brick house, in Northeast Philadelphia's Bustleton section, is much like visiting your grandmother: there is good cheer, and also homemade cake, instant coffee, doilies, medical worries, rubber plants, and a whiff of mothballs emanating from the carpet. Yet after a time one notices something unusual—a dozen photographs of Mrs. Wagner, who is a retired Internal Revenue Service employee, with Ronald Reagan. The pictures, which cover a dining-room breakfront, sideboard, and wall, were taken during the five decades of Reagan's public career, from Hollywood to the White House and beyond.

"We date back to when Lorraine was a leader of a fan club formed in my name when I was in the motion-picture business," Reagan told a Philadelphia newspaper in 1989. "Lorraine is a staunch friend, and I always look forward to her letters." And Lorraine, who is now seventy years old, has always looked forward to his. She has saved two hundred and seventy-six of them—many of them handwritten and some of them five or six pages long—sent to her in the course of more than half a century by Ronald or Nancy Reagan, or both. Many of the letters are highly personal, and, although grammatical errors abound, are an extraordinary showcase for Reagan's views—and their evolution. His independent beliefs come across in unguarded, intimate fashion in almost every letter, and one comes away knowing him far better than one did after reading his bland 1990 autobiography, "An American Life." Wagner hopes that the letters, which she recently sold to the Philadelphia-area autograph dealer Steven Raab, will end up as an intact collection in the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, in California.

The correspondence began in early 1943, when Lorraine Makler was thirteen years old and a devotee of such Hollywood fan magazines as *Photoplay* and *Modern Screen*. She had gone to a second-run movie theatre in South Philadelphia, where "Brother Rat" was showing, and had been charmed by the performance of one of its stars, Ronald Reagan. By then, Lorraine had written to Errol Flynn, Glenn Ford, Alan Ladd, and quite a few others, asking for their autographs, but had received little more than form letters in return. She did, however, get a reply from Reagan: first, a five-by-seven autographed photo, then a penny postcard signed "Ronald," thanking her in a dozen lines for the "swell letter." Reagan had scrawled his reply from the Warner Bros. studio set of a new Irving Berlin movie musical, "This Is the Army."

Lorraine was thrilled that a Hollywood star had actually written to a "nobody" like her. She soon joined the Ronald Reagan Fan Club and wrote back to Reagan, who was then a second lieutenant with the Army Air Force First Motion Picture Unit in Southern California. This time, she asked for an inscribed picture of Reagan in uniform. Once more, Reagan answered, apologizing that the studio wouldn't allow him to send such a photograph—not with soldiers dying at Midway and in Sicily. But a pattern had been established: Lorraine Makler would write, and Reagan would respond. He sent her sixteen notes in 1946 and 1947. "In my early teen years, I had felt terribly insecure and unfulfilled," Wagner told me. "Pouring my heart out in letters to Reagan became an outlet. I had discovered a man who stood apart from his fellow-actors in basic concern and consideration."

Other students at the South Philadelphia High School for Girls quickly discovered that Lorraine, the daughter of a furniture-store manager, had become Reagan-crazed; the caption of her photograph in the 1947 Horizon Year-



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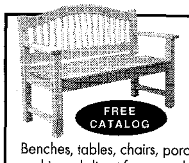

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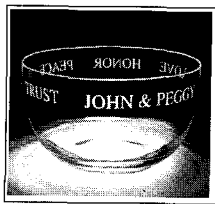

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book reads, "Just say 'Ronald Reagan' to Lorraine and watch her eyes light up! Her hobby is writing to 'Ronnie.' " She saw "Kings Row" nineteen times. Her letters to Reagan were smart and earnest, filled with qualms about the future and with questions about glamorous Hollywood life.

The actor's kindness toward Lorraine is harder to understand at first, but he was clearly someone with a rare gift for extending courtesies to people across the board without regard to political expediency. He answered her questions with a kind of guileless sincerity. "It isn't safe out here in California," he warned her in November of 1947. "You never know when you leave home if you'll ever reach it again all in one piece. I never saw such insane drivers." When Lorraine somewhat presumptuously asked, in January of 1948, about reports that his wife, the actress Jane Wyman, was seeking a divorce after eight years of marriage, Reagan, who had recently been elected president of the Screen Actors Guild, gave her a direct answer: "Janie is still a pretty sick girl in mind, but I'm still hoping that things will be different when she gets over this nervousness, so don't listen to things you hear, please. I know she loves me, even though she thinks she doesn't. . . . Keep your fingers crossed for me." Later that year, Wyman, during a court proceeding, claimed that her husband was emotionally detached and obsessed with the guild; the judge granted her a divorce. "I was elected president for the 4th term of the S.A.G.," Reagan wrote proudly to Lorraine, but he went on to lament that Warner Bros. was dropping him from its regular star roster because he wasn't "a very big drawing card."

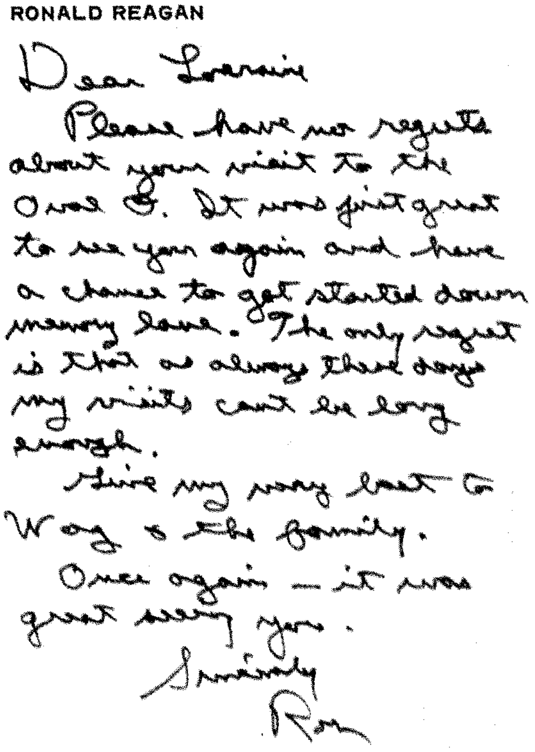
Throughout 1948 and 1949, "Old Man Reagan," as he sometimes referred to himself in letters to Lorraine, wrote openly to her about the depression he felt after a fan named Lulamae Imhoff, a disabled girl whom he called his "adopted sis," died; about his satisfaction with the 1948 election ("I'm sure Truman, with a Democratic congress, will do lots to make things better in every way, and what a landslide it was for him, the votes boy!"); about wanting to help the "less fortunate" at Christmastime; and about the bad weather that plagued the shooting of the studio film "The Hasty Heart" in "damp foggy" England, a country that he said he hoped never to work in again. "Was I ever happy to reach the old USA," he wrote to Lorraine when he returned, in September of 1949. "I hope I can stay in California the rest of my life." During this period, Lorraine also regularly updated Reagan about the activities of his fan club's East Coast chapters.

In May of 1950, Lorraine Makler finally met her idol: he had come to Philadelphia for a U.S. Savings Bond rally in Independence Square. When I visited her recently, she recalled Reagan's reverent patriotism from that afternoon. "He refused to obscure the flag by posing in front of it," she said. "All the others did." But her exchange with Reagan outside Independence Hall was brief, and afterward she was angry at herself for having been so tongue-tied.

Three months later, Lorraine and a friend from Brooklyn—Zelda Multz, the international president of Reagan's fan club—each bought a round-trip train ticket and travelled nine hundred-odd miles on the Pennsylvania Railroad to Dixon, Illinois, Reagan's boyhood home, for what she still describes as a "storylike week." Officers of the four-hundred-member fan club had been invited to spend time with the star, and the two Easterners soon found themselves escorting him around the town where he had gone to elementary and high school. They visited the spot where the Disciples of Christ had baptized him, in a total-immersion cere-

Wagner and Reagan in 1950: On his journey from Hollywood to the Oval Office, the President wrote Wagner hundreds of letters on topics that ranged from his troubled marriage to Jane Wyman to the Iran-Contra affair.

LEFT: COURTESY LORRAINE WAGNER



RONALD REAGAN

Dear Lorraine

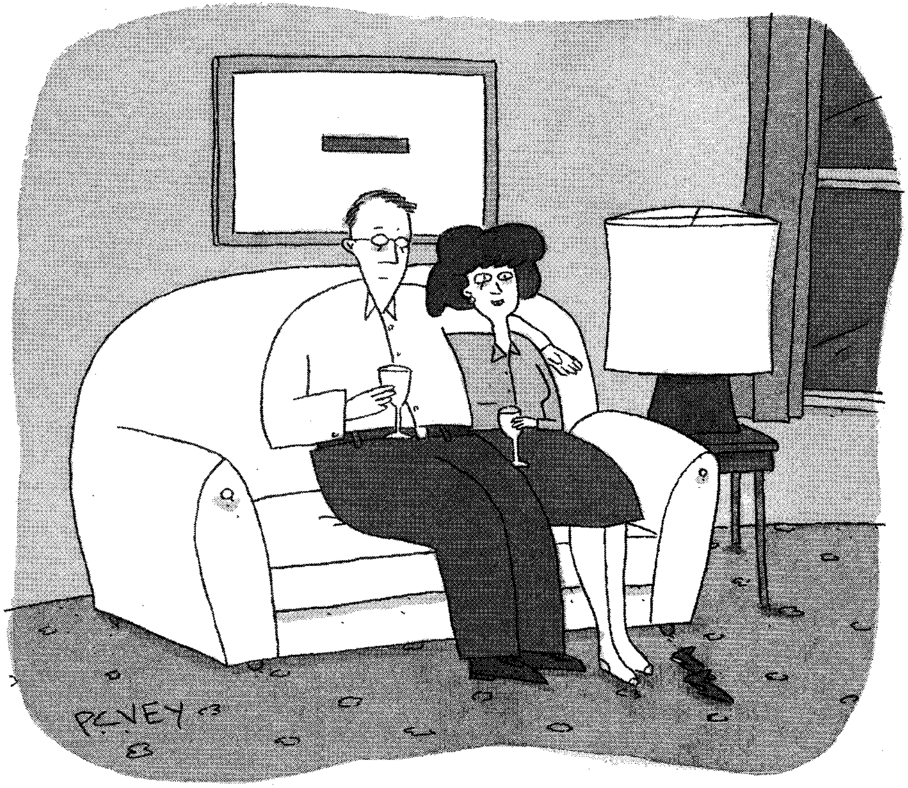
Please have no regrets about your visit to the Oval O. It was just great to see you again and have a chance to get started down memory lane. The only regret is that as always these days my visits can't be long enough.

Give my very best to Wag & the family.

Once again — it was great seeing you.

Sincerely

Ron



"I love these quiet evenings at home battling alcoholism."

mony; introduced him at a screening of his film "Louisa"; ate breakfast with him every morning at the Walgreen Estate; and drove behind him as he rode on horseback in an "Injun Summer" parade. Reagan had broken his right leg in a charity baseball game while sliding into second base; his limping only added to his macho panache.

NOT surprisingly, Dixon, a town of ten thousand, went all out for its home-town celebrity: teachers praised his optimism; small businesses threw fried-chicken picnics; and friends told "mischievous" stories about him and produced homemade casseroles. There was even a sign in a dry-cleaning shopwindow advertising a "Ronald Reagan Special: pants pressed 15 cents a leg, seat free." But it was Lorraine who, at one fête, persuaded Reagan to ignore his aching leg and ask his own surprised mother, "Moms Nelle," for a dance; and she was with Reagan when his agent called from Burbank to offer him a starring role alongside a chimpanzee in "Bedtime for Bonzo." Above all, Wagner told me, she'll never forget "Ronnie" ambling across a lawn in Dixon, his coat slung over his shoulders, as he sang "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling."

In Dixon that summer, Lorraine, who was then twenty-one, became an ad-hoc member of an extended Reagan clan. The fan club itself was "like a family," she felt, with Moms Nelle its official matriarch. "Ron was everything to all of us fans," Wagner explains. "He was considerate, obliging, and very warm." The following year, when Lorraine and Zelda went to Los Angeles to visit a friend, Moms Nelle picked them up at the airport, took them shopping in Chinatown, accompanied them to a horse show in which Reagan was jumping hurdles, and arranged for them to spend a day at Yearling Row, her son's new spread, in the Malibu hills. In anticipation of Lorraine's summer visit, Reagan had written to her, "Boy oh boy, wait till you see [the ranch] I bought. It's a honey, a great big ranch nearer the Ocean, swimming pool and everything. I feel like a kid with a new toy."

Reagan also introduced his young guests to the actress Nancy Davis, whom he was to marry in March of 1952. Virtually all his fans exulted that "Ronnie" had recovered from the reputedly self-centered Wyman and found the more personable Davis. "We all knew she was the love of his life," Wagner told me. In 1954, Lorraine began sending Nancy Reagan "housewifelike letters," discussing cooking, health, raising children, and other domestic joys and vicissitudes, to which she also replied.

Lorraine herself had settled down two years earlier. She'd met Elwood (Wag) Wagner, a Navy veteran, who had joined the Ronald Reagan Fan Club as a way to meet girls. When the Wagners were married, in June of 1952, the Reagans sent them a telegram and, as a wedding gift, a silver tray. Reagan now addressed his letters to Lorraine and Wag, and she sent hers to Ron and Nancy Reagan. She also kept up a regular correspondence with other members of the Reagan family throughout the mid-fifties, and particularly with Moms Nelle, who wrote her about everything from an attack of painful bursitis in her son's left arm to the virtues of prayer and the seriousness of marriage. "Lorraine I know that you and your husband must be very happy, and I am so happy for you both," Moms Nelle wrote on December 10, 1954. "Jane [Wyman] just got her divorce from Mr. Karger," whom she had married after Reagan. "I pray God she will not marry [again], it's such a sin to do this way."

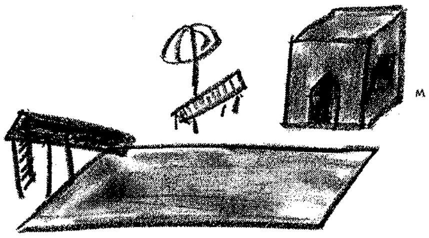
THE Ronald Reagan Fan Club disbanded in 1953, because of financial difficulties, but its members stayed in touch and shared their happiness when, in 1954, Reagan was named the host of "General Electric Theater," a biweekly television drama anthology. Only Lorraine Wagner, however, developed a real relationship with the Reagans, and they came to admire her loyalty. Throughout Reagan's public career, whenever a politician or a journalist was critical of him or his family Wagner would write informed rebuttals, which were published in the Philadelphia *Inquirer*, *Newsweek*, and *Time*, among other periodicals. "I'm really grateful to you for championing my cause," Reagan wrote her after she staunchly defended him against *Motion Picture*, which had attacked him for publicly complaining about journalists who relied on secondhand sources. Possibly worried that Lorraine was getting a little carried away in his defense, Reagan advised her not to get too riled up over the “gossiping buzzard brigade,” and he quoted something his “pop” had once told him: “there is *one* kind of *contest* you should *never* get into with a skunk.”

After the fan club folded, Lorraine’s loyalty clearly became more important to the Reagans. During the Eisenhower era, Reagan’s movie career foundered, and his activism in behalf of the actors’ union had created friction between him and the major studios. What was even worse for his career was that his Gipper persona began to seem old-fashioned. Marlon Brando, Montgomery Clift, and James Dean were appealing to a younger audience; in early 1954, while Elvis Presley was teaming up with Sam Phillips at Sun Records in Memphis, the forty-three-year-old Reagan was acting as m.c. of a variety show, at the Last Frontier casino hotel, in Las Vegas, featuring such music groups as the Continentals, Blackburn Twins, and Honey Brothers. The local press noted that Reagan had “no particular act,” but a “winning personality.” Doing monologues in Las Vegas, he wrote to Lorraine, was like “going over ‘Niagara Falls’ in a tub,” but he gamely added that “the show is going over real big.”

At a time when many Hollywood actors were turning left, Reagan became more conservative, and nothing got him angrier, at least in the days before he entered public life, than the allegation, by the columnist Drew Pearson, that the American Medical Association, in conjunction with General Electric, had paid the actor to lobby against congressional bills improving health care for the elderly. Despite the actor’s denial, Pearson refused to publish a retraction, and Reagan decided to drop the matter, but Lorraine Wagner sent a special-delivery letter to the columnist (and a copy to Reagan), attacking him for misrepresenting Reagan’s sincerity. Reagan relished reading Lorraine’s anti-Pearson manifesto. “I think it’s a masterpiece and I’m most grateful to you,” he wrote to her. “I’ve been watching his column off and on since his blast at me and I honestly believe the case could be made that he is against America. Certainly he lends comfort and aid to the enemy.” In early 1962, when Pearson appeared on a WCAU radio program in Philadelphia, Lorraine called and went after the columnist. “Just a quick line to say ‘hurrah’! for you & I wish I could have heard him squirm,” Reagan wrote Lorraine. “It sounds to me as if you tied him up and hung him out to dry.”

Reagan, to be sure, was opposed to health-care legislation that was sponsored in 1961 by Representative Cecil King. “They want a compulsory health insurance program tied on to Social Security for all senior citizens whether they need it or not,” he wrote to Wagner, and he later added, “I have a dozen quotes from socialists and socialist publications and backers of the King bill boasting that it is only designed to establish the principle so that socialized medicine can follow.” Years later, in 1976, Lorraine wrote a term paper for an English night course she was taking at Philadelphia Community College entitled “Ronald Reagan Views Socialized Medicine.” She got an A on the paper and sent it to Reagan, and he wrote back that he would save it as “a refresher for when the battle for socialized medicine worms up in Congress.”

THE correspondence between Reagan and the Wagners documents with precision his evolution from Roosevelt-Truman Democrat to California conservative. By the early sixties, what Reagan saw as Hollywood liberals and New York élitists had become something of an obsession with him. When ABC, in November of 1962, aired a sympathetic interview with Alger Hiss, Reagan was upset. “I don’t think the Hiss broadcast comes under the banner of news reporting,” he wrote to Wagner. “It was a plain case of allowing a convicted perjuror [sic] and spy to attack a man”—Richard Nixon—“who had served as Vice President of the United States.”



Although he was not a regular churchgoer, Reagan also grew suspicious of what he considered Hollywood’s anti-religious attitude. In one 1962 letter, he recounted to Lorraine, who was an active member of the Temple Beth Ami, in Northeast Philadelphia, the details of a battle he had had with a television director who wanted to cut a scene showing a little girl saying her prayers. “Finally in a near knock down drag-out,” Reagan wrote, “they admitted their objection was because they were atheists.” Reagan’s letters made it clear that he saw the prevailing liberal view in Hollywood to be that Communism was “something that ‘the right wingers’ dreamed up” and that praying to God was for rubes. He began to suppose that it would be his task to set them straight—for America’s sake.

As Reagan became active in behalf of Republican candidates, he used the Wagners to give him the candid perspective of a middle-class American family. In 1964, when Lorraine Wagner expressed concern about the Presidential nominee Barry Goldwater’s views on race and war, Reagan defended the Arizona Senator: “I know I probably sound like a stuck record with this idea about Barry’s being misquoted, and yet the assault against him has now reached such a point of desperation that there seems to be no conscience whatsoever with regard to ignoring things he has actually said,” Reagan wrote Lorraine, who was considering voting for Lyndon Johnson.

As Election Day neared, Reagan expounded further on the real Goldwater, as a man who had “a fantastic record of personal involvement in behalf of negroes long before he ever got involved in politics.” The Goldwater he painted was a caring, libertarian patriot, sincere in his beliefs that the United Nations was usurping America’s power, that NATO was gobbling up too many American dollars, and that foreign aid was, in the main, a gargantuan waste of tax revenues. “Now I’m sure you realize I respect anyone’s right to their political beliefs,” Reagan wrote. “Just make sure that your opinion is based on something other than these false charges and then in the good old American way, its just a case of each of us backing his own choice and all of us accepting with good grace the outcome." Reagan's lobbying worked: Lorraine voted for Goldwater, and, in jest, she told him that it was because he had brainwashed her. "I don't agree that you have been brainwashed," Reagan wrote her on November 5th, two days after the L.B.J. landslide. "I do agree that you kept an open mind, looked at both sides and made a personal decision in the finest example of the tradition of our democracy. If we are to continue having freedom it will be because of people like yourselves and not those who are just blindly going down the road, voting on the basis of who makes the most attractive promise. This was only one battle and the war will go on because freedom is a continuous process."

IN October of 1964, in San Francisco, Reagan delivered the most important speech of his life, "A Time for Choosing." The speech, broadcast on national television, raised over a million dollars for the Goldwater campaign in its final days, but what was more important was that it introduced Reagan as a charismatic new political star. "Well, after the campaign those same Republican leaders called on me and asked if I would run for governor of California in the coming campaign," Reagan later wrote to Lorraine. "I had never given a thought of public life for myself. I was happy to be in show business. They kept after me until Nancy and I were having trouble sleeping. I thought they were crazy."

During this period, Reagan's suspicions of what he saw as the liberal press intensified. In 1965, he met with Lorraine at a political rally in New Haven, Connecticut, and wrote the Wagners thirteen letters, three of them expressing his disdain for the British journalist Jessica Mitford, whom he deemed a Communist, even writing that there had been "many news stories about her sister being one of Hitler's girl friends." In one of the letters, he said he had refused to be interviewed by "the Mitford gal" for a planned profile in *Esquire*, because he was convinced that she would twist his words. In another letter, he wrote, "The Jessica Mitford story finally came out in a magazine called *Ramparts*"—a leftist Catholic periodical. "It seems *Esquire* read it and decided it was too vicious for them. It really doesn't matter because most of *Ramparts*' readers are so left, they already don't like me."

After appearing on NBC's "Meet the Press" during the 1966 gubernatorial campaign, Reagan also lamented that the media tried to force politicians into self-promotion. "I hope you'll believe me when I say that my decision to enter the political race was because I want so much to help preserve this wonderful country for you and the Skipper"—his son Ron—"and all young Americans," Reagan wrote in February of 1966 to the Wagners' daughter, Sandy, who was then seven years old. "There are so many things to be thankful for in America, so many things that must not be lost."

The following November, when Ronald Reagan defeated the two-term incumbent Edmund G. Brown by almost a million votes to become governor of California, a joyful Lorraine Wagner had no doubt that a change had come to America—that Reagan would not back down before the radicals who had taken hold of California's culture. "I think I must be a success already," Reagan wrote her on a letterhead embossed with a golden Great Seal of the State of California, after he moved into the governor's mansion. "I've been 'hung' on two college campuses in effigy," he explained, and he added, "This is going to be a busy life."

DURING his two terms as governor, Reagan wrote to the Wagners about once a month in each of those eight years, often lampooning the State University Regents, and what he saw as the arrogance of the New York *Times* and the "socialist" leanings of the Fresno *Bee*, owned by the heirs of C. K. McClatchy, whose will expressed the hope that the family would continue as "tribunes of the people." Reagan saw that mission differently: "That paper is published by a family who inherited the paper from the founder," he wrote to Lorraine. "[H]e specified the paper must support all programs leading toward government ownership. In other words, the paper's philosophy is socialist. This particular paper, because of that, probably carries on the most uninterrupted, the hardest, and the most dishonest campaign against me and my administration of any publication outside the *Daily Worker*."

One finds a breezy self-confidence in all these gubernatorial letters—Reagan's conviction that the counterculture had met its match in the Gipper. "I've always resented the radical kids spoiling the Churchill V for Victory by their use

IN THE LAST DAYS

In the last days of my father's illness
he lived on, separate from us, in a tiny room
with a window in it, where we might look in and watch
him laboring in his heavy sleep.

And only once did he startle up
from the pillow, wide-eyed, and slapped one palm
across the other—*Psst!* he said, and smiled, and shook his head
as if in disbelief down into sleep again.

I don't know what my father saw then, wandering
in some mazy episode of time.
That was forty years ago. Forty years, like yesterday.
Almost his own age now, I can see

his face before me: his wry smile of wonder,
as if something had leapt up underfoot
in the dark and sped away
as he watched.

—PETER EVERWINE

of it as an anti-Vietnam gesture," Reagan wrote in one letter. Like a sheriff in a Western, Reagan was spoiling for a showdown—an ideological showdown with the whole cadre of California's leftist luminaries. He condemned George Jackson, the black-power leader of an attempted prison break at San Quentin. "Jackson was a hard-bitten, violent criminal who engineered what was nothing less than a massacre," Reagan wrote Lorraine in September, 1971. "I wish some of those bleeding hearts could have had to make the phone calls I made to the widows of the guards."

He was equally annoyed by what he considered low-rent demagoguery on the part of César Chávez, the Chicano activist. "Chavez is attempting by blackmail to create a union without giving the workers themselves an opportunity to choose whether they want one or which one it should be," Reagan wrote to Lorraine, responding to a letter from her about how her Philadelphia rabbi had supported a produce boycott to express sympathy with the plight of Salinas Valley migrant workers. "Thousands of Mexican-Americans in California are in opposition to Chávez and they are to be found working in the vineyards, making good money and utterly opposed to joining his union," he went on. "Frankly, I'm a little disgusted with the clergy of every denomination who without making any effort to learn the truth, are continuing to consider this a kind of holy crusade." On the other hand, Reagan told Lorraine, he had no respect for right-wing extremist groups either, who preached hate and the destruction of the federal government. "About Liberty Lobby," Reagan wrote her, "I have always thought it was a little far out."

Reagan also reassured her that President Nixon wasn't getting too soft on Hanoi and hoped he would be forceful enough in helping Taiwan maintain its U.N. seat. "Personally," he wrote to Lorraine, "I think the Red Chinese are a bunch of murdering bums . . . but in the big chess game going on, where Russia is still head man on the other side, we need a little elbow room."

After Nixon was forced to resign, in the summer of 1974, and Gerald Ford became President, Reagan's ultimate ambitions crystallized: he decided to seek the 1976 Republican Presidential nomination. Lorraine Wagner wasted no time in going to work for Reagan, writing hundreds of letters to media outlets around the country. For his part, Reagan was frustrated by the "shameless manner" in which President Ford was rounding up delegates. He saw himself as a reform candidate—destined, if elected, to roll back Communism abroad and introduce major tax cuts at home.

When Ford narrowly defeated Reagan in the primaries and won the nomination, Reagan backed the ticket enthusiastically, and had nothing good to say about Ford's opponent, the former Georgia governor Jimmy Carter. "Carter disturbs me more than a little," Reagan wrote in a letter to Lorraine's daughter just days before the 1976 election. "I have a deep-seated feeling that he is a real phony."

WITH Carter in the White House, Reagan's public life became relatively quiet; he corresponded with the Wagners from an eighth-floor office

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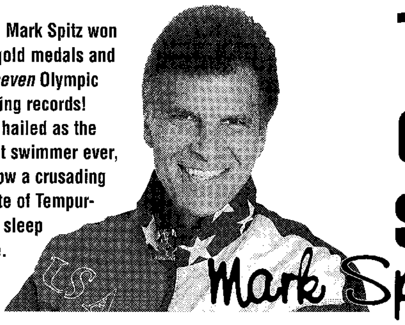

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Mark Spitz

—Mark Spitz, America's all-time champion swimmer

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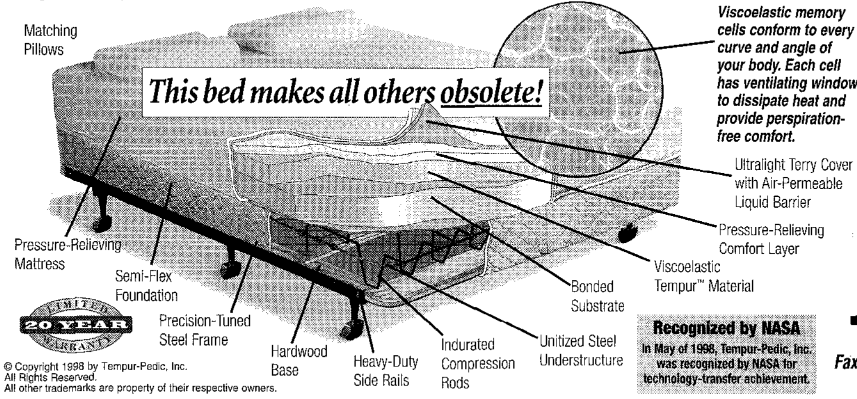

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suite on Wilshire Boulevard, in Los Angeles. A number of his Carter-era letters deal with his disapproval of the Panama Canal Treaty and also of the Republicans who supported it. "You asked about Bill Buckley," Reagan replied to Lorraine when she had asked how the editor of the conservative *National Review* could favor returning the canal to Panama. "I think Bill is sincere, but he has always been a close friend of Henry Kissinger and I think he became a supporter of the Canal treaty idea when Kissinger was negotiating the treaty."

As time went on, Reagan disagreed with just about everything Carter did as President, from pardoning Vietnam draft evaders to creating the Department of Energy. That Carter was a member of David Rockefeller's Trilateral Commission didn't please Reagan, either. "Your concern about trilateral commission is shared by many, including me," he wrote to the Wagners. "I've enclosed a packet that gives some background as well as a few eyebrow-lifting remarks by a commission member. Naturally it isn't a research piece which digs down deep, but it's obvious the tri-lateralists believe there is an elite which should guide the affairs of men."

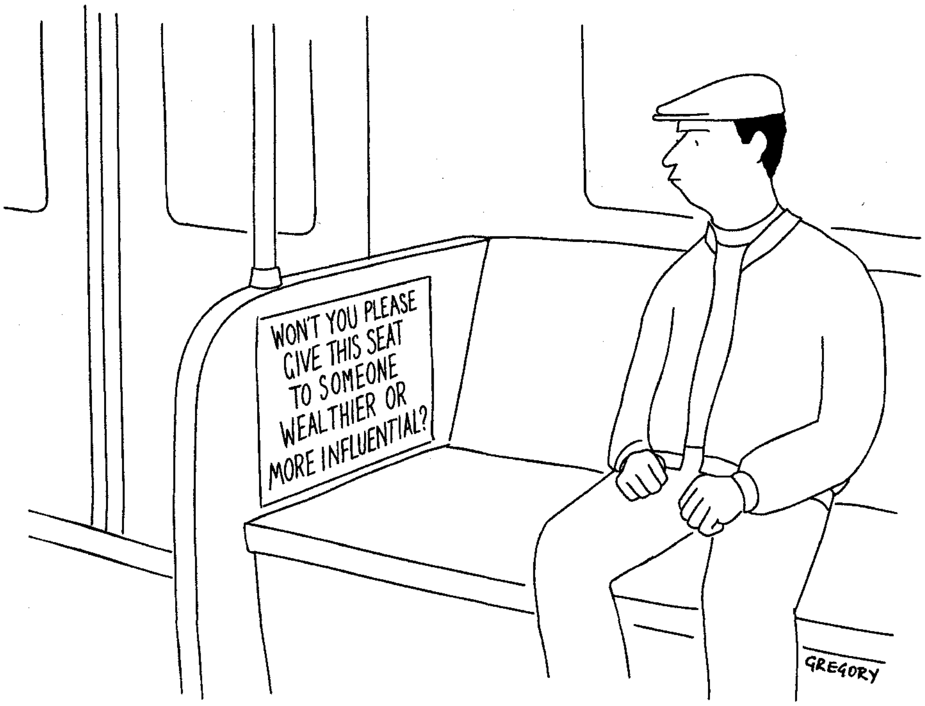
When Reagan ran for President in 1980, Lorraine Wagner once more began monitoring the press in her friend's behalf. She found it painful that Reagan, then sixty-nine, was portrayed by some journalists as senile. "[A] doctor who writes for the New York Times insisted on getting my entire medical history from all the doctors I've ever seen including those who give me my annual checkup," Reagan had complained after Lawrence Altman wrote a famous article raising the issue of health in the campaign. "The funny thing is he was a young doctor, but I think I'm in better shape."

The Wagners attended Reagan's first inauguration, and a procession of those long-ago high-school friends who had once mocked Lorraine's fandom suddenly began inviting her to lunch and asking for Presidential autographs. Reagan certainly did not forget his pen pal just because he was now the leader of the Free World. "We're a little homesick for California," he wrote to Lorraine after his first month in office, "but I must admit that I'm enjoying the opportunity to start working on the problems we have been thinking and talking about for so long." And she knew as well as anyone what Reagan meant: that his dream was to crush Marxism-Leninism, which he instinctively understood was "an empty cupboard." In March of 1981, after John Hinckley, Jr., tried to assassinate Reagan outside the Washington Hilton Hotel, Nancy temporarily took up the correspondence with Lorraine. "Thank God this whole nightmare is hopefully over," Nancy wrote to her on June 1st, as her husband continued to mend from his gunshot wound. "I still can't believe it really happened—but God was really sitting on our shoulders—I still have Ronnie."

Despite the demands of the "Oval O," as he called it, Reagan continued to find time to write to the Wagners, but his letters became nostalgic—trips down "memory lane" about the days at Warner Bros., and when he was nimble enough to jump fences on his "long-time favorite" horse, Little Man, and could walk the uncrowded beaches of Santa Barbara without being blinded by flashbulbs. "It seems only yesterday when we first started corresponding," Reagan wrote to her on July 6, 1983. "Your friendship over the past 40 years means more than we can say."

Lorraine Wagner visited the Oval Office three times during Reagan's Presidency. "The first time was so beautiful," she told me with a sigh, "because he had a little-boy look, like he was saying, 'See, I told you I would make it.' " She and her husband attended the second inauguration, in 1985, and to the end of his term the Wagners continued to send knick-knacks to the Reagans: clever bumper stickers, an eighties time capsule, a colorful, inaugural-theme wastebasket that Lorraine designed; Reagan told her that he would toss big spending bills into it. Reagan gave her a code to put on her letters so that they would come to him directly, and not be lost in some correspondence office.

The only time Reagan disappointed Lorraine Wagner was in 1985, when he visited West Germany's Bitburg military cemetery, the burial site of a number of Nazi S.S. soldiers who had fought U.S. troops at the Battle of the Bulge during the Second World War. She was hurt by that decision of his, and she told him that it would damage his reputation. Reagan did not respond directly to this. Then, during the Iran-Contra affair, Lorraine cringed when her President was forced to give a deposition. "My interrogation on the Poindexter case was at worst a few hours of boredom," Reagan reassured his old friend, responding to a letter in which she had expressed her worry that allegations of deception had


WON'T YOU PLEASE GIVE THIS SEAT TO SOMEONE WEALTHIER OR MORE INFLUENTIAL?
GREGORY

wounded him. "I had to say, 'I can't recall' to so many questions—like what I did on November 26, 1986. I was tempted several times to reply by asking the lawyer 'where were you three years ago last Friday?' But I didn't." In a Trumanesque letter written at the height of the scandal, Reagan wrote that a "political lynching" was indeed being conducted in Washington, but that "my conscience is completely clear" so he was "not losing any sleep."

After Reagan left office, in January of 1989, he continued to write to the Wagners, now and then signing off with "Love, Ron," and discussing everything from health problems and fast horses to the flourishing of global democracy to religion. ("If I mentioned Armageddon in my lifetime," he wrote to Lorraine in early 1991, "it was accompanied by the Bible prophecy that no man would know of its coming but certain signs and events would precede its coming"—such as earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.) His letters revealed a youthful excitement that America had won the Cold War and that he had lived to see the Berlin Wall torn down. He told his fans about his visit to Eastern Europe in September of 1990, on which he had actually taken along a hammer and chiseled off his own chunk of the Wall. Germany's reunification had not yet occurred, but Berliners could now go back and forth over the border, and when the East German guards caught sight of Ronald Reagan they jumped down from their posts and rushed over to shake his hand. "Let me tell you, our trip to Germany, Poland, and Russia was amazing," he wrote to Wagner. "In all three countries people on the street would actually applaud and cheer for the USA and this would include high-ranking government officials. They are definitely on their way to democracy and free enterprise."

And Lorraine Wagner, who was then well into her sixties, continued to defend Ronald Reagan, just as she had done as a teen-ager. In 1991, when Kitty Kelley published a gossipy biography of Nancy Reagan, Lorraine immediately wrote a long, furious note to the author (and sent a copy to the Reagans), challenging her on some fifty points of fact. "There are no words to properly thank you for your letter, the one to us and that one to that K.K. character," Reagan wrote in appreciation. "You'll be happy to know that scores of people among the thousand K.K. cites as her informants have made contact with us and told us they've never had any contact with her at all. Incidentally we have word that her book is not selling and is piling up in the bookstores."

In his last letters to Lorraine Wagner, before Alzheimer's disease forced an end to their correspondence, Reagan seemed in generally good spirits. "I'm really optimistic about what's going on in the Soviet Union," he wrote her in January of 1992. "I think the Soviets are really moving to become as free as we are." While he realized that history would forever link him to President Mikhail Gorbachev as half of the pair of bold leaders who ended the Cold War, his more pressing concern was that Russian bureaucrats who were loath "to give up their privileges" would try to block reform at every turn. Reagan expressed particular pleasure that his "darn good" vice-president, George Bush, who had "played a major role in everything we were doing," was now sitting in the Oval Office. He also wrote letters explaining why he was for free trade with Mexico and against women in combat, how Bush's Desert Storm in the Persian Gulf was "kindling patriotism," and how his own Strategic Defense Initiative—the so-called Stars Wars plan—had brought the Soviets to negotiate the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, in 1987. His only nagging concern, he reported in 1992, was that Bush would not be reëlected, and that a Democratic Congress would spell temporary disaster for America.

Three years later, Lorraine Wagner received a farewell message from Reagan, the same one sent to thousands of friends after the public announcement that he suffered from Alzheimer's. That short note officially ended an epistolary relationship that had lasted for fifty-two years.♦

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ONWARD AND UPWARD WITH THE ARTS

MACY'S PARADE

What it takes to launch a fresh talent.

BY LOUISA KAMPS

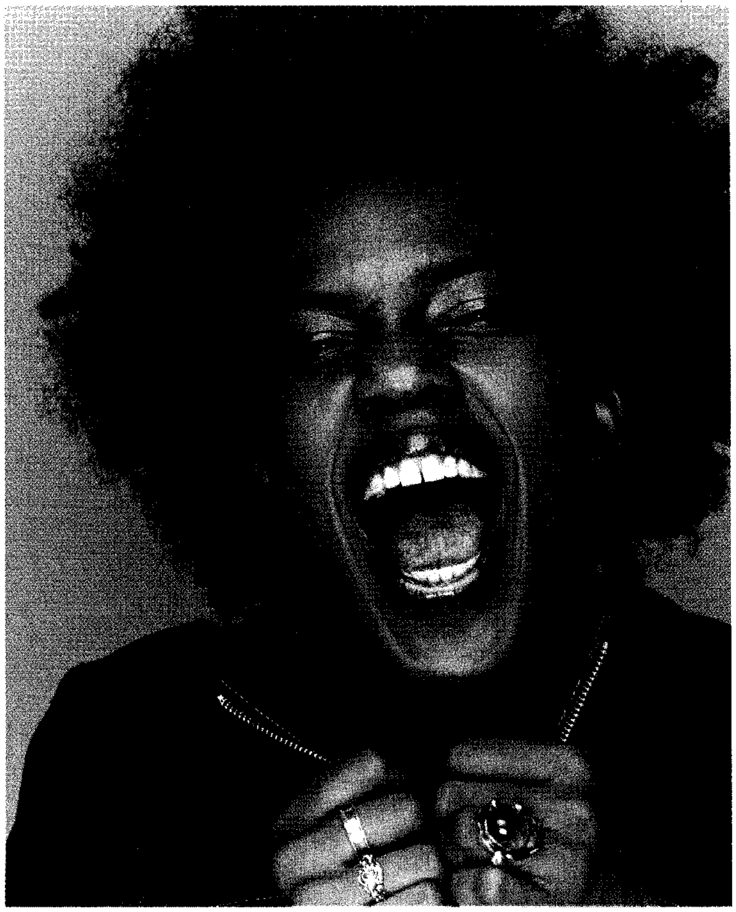
A MUGGY mid-June afternoon at the Bowery Ballroom, in lower Manhattan: a sound check for a promotional "showcase" concert by a singer-songwriter named Macy Gray, who is supposed to be the next big thing. Her album, "Macy Gray on How Life Is," won't be released until late July, but her label, Epic Records, has already begun, as an executive at the company puts it, "organically seeding the record out." Gray doesn't quite fit a niche. She has no apparent affinity for the regal posturing of hip-hop divas like Missy Elliott, or the cerebral male-bashing of hard-rockers like Liz Phair, or the versifying of the folkie poetesses, like Jewel, who make up what music-industry people call the "girl with guitar" genre. Therefore, the approach to marketing Gray has been, in the words of another executive, "very aggressive, but *subtly* aggressive." Last Christmas, Epic arranged for Gray to sing, anonymously, on the soundtrack of a Baby Gap TV ad. (Shortly afterward, an article in the Washington *Post* marvelled at the voice of the singer in the ad and breathlessly revealed her identity.) Since then, the Epic people have sent early versions of Gray's songs to d.j.s at clubs and colleges and on radio shows. A futuristic video of one of the songs, "Do Something," which was shot by a highly regarded director named Mark Romanek, has been broadcast on MTV.

Tonight, the company has invited a cache of music-industry and media people—"three hundred or so tastemakers, of which you and I are two," a P.R. woman tells me. Another is Polly Anthony, the president of Epic/550 Records, who is wearing a trim white pants suit. With evident sincerity, she touches its left lapel and says, "Macy gets you right *here*." She also says, "In the last five years, the music business has become small 'M,' big 'B.' But for me Macy has capitalized the 'M' again."

An up-tempo song—"I Can't Wait to Meetchu"—from Gray's album is playing loudly on the sound system. At first, it sounds like a rousing, get-you-psyched-for-your-date song: "So glad to have a love that's true!" But when I close my eyes and listen more closely it occurs to me that—oops—she's singing not about lust but about finally coming face to face with her Maker. ("I do my best to do right got to get to the way up high.") Then a twelve-member band—with a horn section, a bongo player, a d.j., and two fly, gyrating backup singers—sets up, and begins putting on something like an old-school soul-review show. The band is tight live, and Gray dominates it. She has been likened, variously, to Nina Simone, Al Green, Janis Joplin, Joe Cocker, Rod Stewart (on helium), and Louis Armstrong. With jazzy, funky phrasing, her voice—alternately raspy, fluid, purring, fierce—quickly pulses on notes that you'd expect to be dragged out, and lingers gorgeously on ones you never saw coming. She plays with her microphone and rocks it on its base, as if she were testing the physics of some old Buddy Holly move. Sometimes her voice seems to float, over lines like "Disappear your low low lows and your woe woe woes / Just like that, it's a natural fact."

Gray is twenty-nine, and six feet tall. She wears a long, saggy denim shirt and blue trousers, and has an oversize pair of Gucci sunglasses pushed up onto her forehead. She has cat eyes, a scraggly nimbus of curls, and the fidgety, distracted manner of a hyperactive high-school basketball player. The songs are about love ("I Try"), about making love ("Sex-o-Matic," which goes, "I am a sex-o-matic venus freak when I'm with you"), and about bumping off a mean old lady who tried to stiff her boyfriend out of his paycheck, looting the lady's "green pasture" of cash, and finding out that having money "sure is nice" ("I've Committed Murder"). Throughout the rehearsal, she directs the band closely, walking among them in a sort of deinstitutionalized shamble.

Gray is not a meticulously coached ingénue mouthing focus-group-approved pop. She writes her own lyrics, and has assembled an eclectic band,



Macy Gray has been likened to Nina Simone, Al Green, Janis Joplin, Joe Cocker, Rod Stewart (on helium), and Louis Armstrong.

PAUL SMITH

aiming, in the words of her dreadlocked drummer, Dion Murdock, to "create a vibe like a Rainbow Coalition, or Sly and the Family Stone of the nineties." She inhabits her music so deeply, and so eccentrically, that even the club's new-ironist bartender, stocking his fridge in a ripped hockey jersey and yellow bug goggles, can't help go-go shaking his hips like a fool.

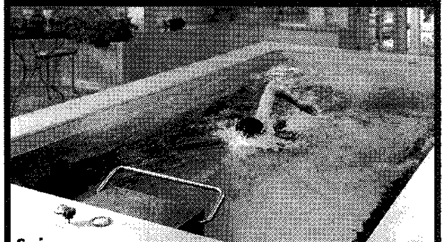
It is a convention among pop-music writers to describe what we were doing at the moment of the First Encounter. Me, I was spending Sunday night with my radio. Vin Scelsa, a longtime New York d.j., now on WNEW, who often previews unreleased albums, had alerted his listeners. "Make note of the moment," he said. "It's May 10, 1999, one-fifteen in the morning. You'll want to remember the first time you heard Macy Gray." Then he put on the song that will be the album's first single, "Do Something": "Like Cleopatra got the masses at my feet / Gotta living dwell down on easy street." I was walking toward my bed, and I stopped suddenly, because I didn't want my creaky floor to interfere with the sound. During the next number, "Why Didn't You Call Me," I perked up even more as I listened to Gray deliver her own funny, frank account of a familiar indignity: "By the phone I wait . . . Hey! Why didn't you call me?" Scelsa later told me that he had been mystified that a singer like Gray could spring forth fully formed. "There's a sense of timelessness and authority in her voice," he said. "There's that echo of Billie Holiday that pops up from time to time. And the tonal quality of her voice is bone-chilling, in the way that it has these incredible echoes of a whole century's worth of singers floating through it; you feel you're in the presence of someone who's sort of stepped out of a cloud."

AFTER the sound check, the singer and the band retire to a faintly sweaty-smelling dressing room to hang out and eat Thai food before the evening show. Gray and I sit together in the corner. She's shy, tugging her cuffs over her hands and only occasionally looking up from the floor to steal a sidewise glance at me. Her unamplified speaking voice, when I finally hear it, turns out to be just as weird as her singing voice—goofily high, breathy, a bizarre hybrid of James Brown and Minnie Mouse. And her entire demeanor seems abstracted, all over the road. But as she speaks I realize that she has been reading my mind. "I always had kind of a funny voice, you know, a peculiar kind of voice," she says. As the second of four children, growing up in Canton, Ohio, she rarely spoke, she has said, "because every time I talked the kids would make fun of me." Her mom is a teacher, and her dad, who is now retired, worked in a steel factory and as a barber. She listened to all her parents' Marvin Gaye, Stevie Wonder, and Aretha Franklin records, but, she says, "it never crossed my mind that I'd be an entertainer." When she was in the fourth grade, she wrote a limerick about a mother who gave her baby a bottle of beer instead of milk, and the teacher called her mother to complain. "So I discovered early that I had a little knack for writing."

Macy Gray's real name is Natalie McIntyre. She took her stage name from a friend of her father's in Canton. In high school, she went "Prince crazy," she says, and painted her entire bedroom magenta after his "Purple Rain" album came out. She attended a Midwestern boarding school on scholarship but was expelled and ran away—"The teacher in detention put his hand on my knee and I complained, but when they kicked me out a couple of weeks later they said something was wrong with my grades or whatever." She was eventually found sleeping in a car on the side of a road in Kansas.

Back at her local public high school, where she finished her junior and senior years, she became seriously interested in black writers. Her mother, who had been through the civil-rights movement in the sixties, suggested specific books. "I read a lot of Angela Davis and black-history stuff," Gray says. "Everything aside from the books I had to read in school had to be by a black writer." At the same time, she became interested in blaxploitation films and in the kinds of "gritty stories" directed by Martin Scorsese and John Cassavetes. "I've always liked crime stories with a kind of love story at the core of them. Like about street kids—but who they are when they get home."

Gray's twenty-two-year-old sister, Nehlia, who works as a biotechnician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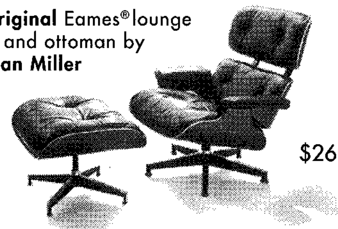
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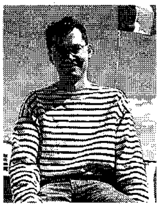
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in a sleep-research lab in California, has said of her, "She never wanted to do what everybody else was doing—go to a good school, be the perfect, responsible person. She could always see past the present, which is really hard when you're from a small town." When Macy eventually confessed her desire to be a singer, Nehlia responded, "Are you *crazy*? You have the weirdest voice."

After high school, Macy rejected her parents' wish that she join R.O.T.C. as a way of reducing tuition costs at the University of Southern California, in Los Angeles—"I was *not* down with that," she says—and instead enrolled at the school with financial help from her parents, loans, and a government grant. She studied screenwriting there.

During this same period, Gray says, she started to idolize Billie Holiday, but for all the wrong reasons. "You know, I wanted to die young and go on drugs and all that shit. But she must have been *miserable*." Then, she continues, "I met this kid who was in music, and he had a bunch of instrumental tracks and his own studio, and he figured that since I was a writing major maybe I could write lyrics. So we started hanging out, writing together, and we'd have, like, different musicians and singers come in and play on the tracks. But there was this one song that the singer never showed up for. I sang it down myself, just so everybody could hear it. And my friend left it like that. And this other kid got ahold of the tape and he asked me to be in his jazz band."

This got her started singing standards in a series of L.A. hotel bars, and that eventually led to a record deal with Atlantic Records, for which she recorded an album four years ago. The album was more oriented toward traditional rock than her current album is, and before it could be released the executive responsible for it left the company, and Gray's contract was dropped. By that time, she was involved with a man she later married, a mortgage collector. The marriage was a disaster, by her account. They have three children, and were divorced last summer. The kids, four, three, and one, are staying with Gray's parents, in Canton, while she tours. As she is telling me how much she misses them, she is summoned to get ready for the show.

THE Sunset Boulevard office of Jeff Blue, who is a vice-president of Zomba Music Publishing, is decorated with a drum set and posters and platinum albums of some groups he's signed. The most famous are Korn and Limp Bizkit, thrashy rap-metal bands that sound nothing like Macy Gray. (Limp Bizkit's current album is No 1. on the charts.) Blue, a buff, T-shirted thirty-one-year-old, began in the business by working for an entertainment lawyer, and he's a frustrated musician himself. "I started writing for *Billboard*, writing about breaking bands," he says. "I wanted people to see the name Jeff Blue attached to an article and say, 'He's got *ears*.' " Today, as a music publisher, he listens to fifty or sixty new acts every week.

Blue first heard Macy Gray two years ago, when someone passed along a demo tape. "I wasn't into the heavy-rock vibe, which the songs on that unreleased Atlantic album had," he says. "But when I heard Macy's voice, even over a big backbeat, I was, like, 'Holy shit!' It was quirky, with imperfections all over it, but the imperfections were what gave it sincerity." Leaning forward, he adopts a confessional tone. "There's a big lack of sincerity in music these days."

Blue tracked the singer down, at her parents' house in Ohio, in the fall of 1997, just after Gray had separated from her husband, but she didn't seem particularly responsive. "I was, like, 'We've got to hook up *immediately*.' My enthusiasm was off the Richter scale. But she was, like, 'Cool. Cool.' She was so shy." Actually, Gray didn't want to let on that she had kids, and was about to have another one. Eventually, Blue persuaded her to come back to Los Angeles, where he installed her and her children in a motel while she looked for a place to live. He helped her assemble a group of musicians, and rented a studio, where she wrote and recorded a number of new songs. Then he sent the demo to five record companies: Universal, Interscope, Arista, Epic, and Atlantic. Concerned about the stigma attached to the Atlantic debacle, he decided to identify his new singer as Mushroom, and soon afterward he had the pleasure of informing Ahmet Ertegun, the co-founder and co-chairman of Atlantic, that Mushroom was actually a singer the label had already dropped. Ertegun didn't care, and insisted on meeting with Gray the following week. Blue recounts these events as if they were the fondest memories of his life. "On the Sunday we were supposed to fly to New York, I took Macy to Nordstrom's to get her a bunch of new clothes. I put everything on my credit card, and I'm telling all the salesgirls, 'This girl's going to be huge!'"

Speaking of the contract Gray eventually signed with Epic, in April of 1998, Blue says, "It was one of the biggest deals of the year. She got a *killer-ass* deal." He is confident that he'll easily recoup his own investment in Gray. She has been writing a song for Tina Turner, he says, and Hollywood has already come calling. "Bar scenes, love scenes—her songs are so visual. She'll film-and-TV up the *yin-yang*."

Polly Anthony, the president of Epic, which is a division of Sony Music, is occupying a top-floor suite in the Four Seasons Hotel in Beverly Hills. She is here to attend Gray's final showcase. The suite has a shimmering blond dining table as large as my living room. Anthony, an elegant, fine-boned woman in her mid-forties, greets me at the door in a dense white bathrobe and immediately excuses herself to take a couple of calls, in which the words "deliver" and "deliverable" figure prominently.

When she finally settles into a chair next to me, opening a soda and lighting a cigarette, she chats for a while about the exhilaration of working in the music business. "I still remember what I was *wearing* when I first heard Macy," Anthony says. "It was a black Jil Sander suit. I was in a meeting in our office in New York, listening to some music that people had brought in, and then this voice came on, and I was, like, '*What . . . is . . . this*?' I just had this feeling inside of me of, like, desire. *Must have!*" The competition was keen. "These were really, really great record companies—not someone that I could just squash like a bug." After recounting her success in wooing Gray, Anthony says, "I *love* what I do!"

The third major player involved in the rise of Macy Gray is Andrew Slater, whom Polly Anthony recruited to produce the new album. He is now Gray's manager as well. A youthful forty-two, with wavy, well-kempt shoulder-length hair, he was once a music writer and a guitarist. "I've always been all music, all the time," he says. "Here's my brain. Rational thought?" He pinches his thumb and forefinger close together. "And music?" Both hands mark out a bread-loaf-size block.

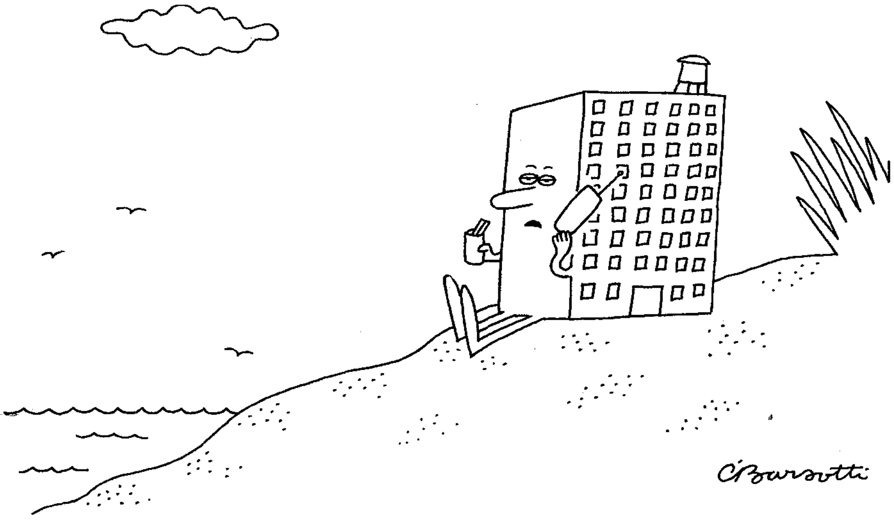
Wearing a gray sweater and gray trousers, Slater is sitting in a sleek new Sunset Boulevard office, which he has asked me not to describe because it's not decorated yet. Several framed platinum records—by, among others, Fiona Apple and the Wallflowers, both of whom he has also produced—are propped against the walls, waiting to be hung.

When the tracks on the Mushroom demo were being laid down, Gray would come into the studio humming a few lines, and the musicians would suggest the chords and drumbeats that would form the backbone of the music. Then Gray would go into the vocal booth and sing her lyrics, which none of the musicians had heard before. Slater, brought in after the demo was completed, persuaded Gray to overlay the tracks, which were relatively simple, with a panoply of sounds out of the rock-and-roll archives—marimbas, eerie-sounding seventies synthesizers, and guitar licks supplied by the P-Funk All Star member DeWayne (Blackbyrd) McKnight.

"Those influences are all hers—hip hop, or rap, and soul, and funk, and blues, and rock," Slater says. "And when somebody writes lyrics that paint such vivid pictures it becomes easy to find a way to *underline* whatever line she's singing—you know, *punctuate* a sentence." He describes how he solidified the "Al Green thing" of one song, the Aretha Franklin feeling of another. A producer, he says, is like a stylist at a fashion shoot. "My job is, like, 'What are you going to wear with the white pants? Do you want to highlight the pants? You want to highlight the shirt? Wear the hat?' So you kind of figure out, 'I want to highlight the hat. So I'll wear muted tones down *here*.'" He points to his pants and shoes. "'But I'll wear the leopard-skin pillbox hat.'"

Shutters on the Beach, a Santa Monica hotel. In a suite overlooking the ocean, a team of tiny, stylish people from a Japanese magazine called *In Natural* are busy photographing Gray. Their sneakers are covered with kaleidoscopic suède appliqués. Gray is game and relaxed, and is perhaps still high on a compliment from the actor Laurence Fishburne, who passed her as she was coming into the hotel and said that he wanted to use one of her songs in a movie. Eventually, Gray is led down to the beach. A marketing coördinator from Epic Japan, who is serving as translator, tells her gravely, as if she were about to be stuck with a needle, that the photographers are now going to take the picture for the cover of the magazine. "Okeydoke," Gray says, and she shuffles onto the sand. She squints up at the seagulls while a stylist swathes her head in an orange mohair turban. When the photographers are finished, the translator informs Gray that she must now record a long set of spots for Japanese radio stations:

"Hi, Yuko, this is Macy Gray and you are listening to Tokyo Life on J-WAVE. Please take a listen to 'Do



"Two lousy weeks. You people can surely make do for two lousy weeks."

Something.' " ("Do Something," already released in Japan, has climbed to No. 5 there.)

"Hey, Shoji, this is Macy Gray. You are listening to Dancing Groove on FM Yokohama. Stay tuned for the hot track 'Dooooo Something.' "

When the announcements are done, the translator presents Gray with a pretty purse made from kimono fabric.

"Phat," Gray says in thanks.

After the crew departs, Gray says, "Japan. I've never even *been* there! That's a trip, huh?"

Her cell phone begins ringing repeatedly as friends call to tell her that they've just heard "Do Something" on a big local L.A. station that has jumped the gun on the American release date. This seems more real to her than Yokohama. "Is that off the hook, or what?" Gray squeaks ecstatically.

Over the next couple of hours, the two of us zigzag around Los Angeles in the back of a town car as she and her friends, phoning back and forth, try to decide whether they're going to celebrate at a record-release party in Silver Lake or at a Martini bar in Hollywood. After a pit stop near Koreatown, where she gets out of the car and jogs across the lawn of a house that belongs to D J Kiilu, who is the d.j. in her band, she runs back to the car and tells me he's still getting dressed. This gives us time to hunt for the latest issue of *Vibe*, which she has heard mentions her album. We head for a nearby supermarket, and there she digs for coins at the bottom of her handbag (a handsome studded black leather satchel from Barneys, which, she tells me proudly, was a gift from Polly Anthony). She doesn't come up with much, so I give her the dregs from my wallet, and then she shoves a wad of bills and coins over the seat to the driver. "Do you mind going in a-looking?" she asks him. "It shouldn't be more than three-fifty."

While he's in the store, I ask, "Why were you reluctant to go back to L.A. when Jeff Blue called you?"

"I had decided to go back and see what I could do in Ohio. I'd got to the point where I was a bit jaded on that whole record-company-people thing. I thought maybe it wasn't meant to be. Because a lot of people will make you promises, or call you into the office, and get your hopes up, and then they don't do nothing." When the record companies were suddenly bidding for her, she says, "They all tripped out, maybe because they thought I just didn't care."

Though she's cautious about speaking of her ex-husband ("Let me think of something you can print"), it's evident that the relationship was painful. "I learned a lot from him, even though it wasn't a good thing. My only regret is that I didn't leave sooner, because if you're taking stuff, putting up with people, you just feel like a sucker."

When the driver returns, having struck out, Gray frowns, then tells him, "We've got to go to a 7-Eleven—they always have *Vibe*." He tells her he has no idea where one is, but she asks him to drive on anyway. "Any big street will have one." As we pull into the street, she says, "Ever since I was a kid, I always wanted to do crazy stuff. I've always been a bit spaced out, you know—thinking about other shit. You can spend your whole life trying to make up for a single day when people made fun of you."

I tell her something Nehlia had said to me: "When I first heard my sister sing, I went, '*Now* it all makes sense, the way she was, always being so crazy and different.' "

"When you get a song on the radio, you're *down*," Gray says. "You know what I mean?"

We finally find a 7-Eleven, and the driver, who has started to get a little testy, returns to the car and tosses into Gray's lap the only *Vibe* he could find. It turns out to be an old issue. She grouses for a minute, but then decides to let it go, saying, "Maybe only subscribers have the new one." As we head back to Kiilu's, she tells me, laughing with pride, that even her mother has come around. "She's always hinting that I need a real job. But I think it was when she actually saw me play for the first time, in Atlanta the other night, that she believed me."

Still, at this exact moment, as the beasts of commerce and fame gather in anticipation of Macy Gray, I can't help thinking of something that Polly Anthony told me. She has tricky twin wishes for Macy—that she achieve peace in her heart *and* global dominance. Around the same time, a bassist in her band, Arik Marshall, passed on to me his concern about the ultimate absurdity of all the "cell phones and power lunches," as he put it, that drive the machinery of the music industry. When I mention such things to Gray, she says that if the metamorphosis into stardom actually occurs she will simply complete the four albums she is contracted for and then retire to France with her children. "My mom always said, 'It's not important what you want to be but *who* you want to be,' " she says as she looks out the window. "I'm not, 'Oh, I hate myself'—I'm not one of those, but there are things you see in other people that you admire, and you say, 'That'd be dope. She's cool.' But you can't really just say, 'I'm going to be like that.' " She stops and laughs—a high-pitched *hahahaha*. She tells me she's at work on a new song, called, as it happens, "What I Want to Be."

THE Viper Room, a Los Angeles club. Several hundred tastemakers—dressed in sarongs, cowboy hats, and clamdiggers—have shown up, and as the music gets under way they begin singing along with the choruses and yelling out "May-*cy!*" Gray spreads her hands out and waves her fingers. Then she grins and sings, "I'm the latest *cray-ay-ay-aze!*"

Along with her sister and her friends, many of the new, significant people in her life are scattered around the room: Jeff Blue, standing near the front of the crowd, hops up and down and pumps a fist in the air as she sings; Andrew Slater, over to one side, leans against a wall with his chin up, watching Gray and the band as intently as if he were examining an X-ray; Polly Anthony, standing by herself toward the back of the pack with her arms crossed, sways. All the high-powered components of this juggernaut are in their places and manning their positions. They're professionals, in a tough business, but for the moment they seem to be getting a contact high off the oddball vocalist onstage. Beside me, a guy who has been doing his own strange little frug throughout the show, a guy who is not part of the machine, suddenly stops dancing and makes like he's taking notes, too, scribbling on an invisible pad with an invisible pen. "*Great . . . fucking . . . show!*" he shouts slowly. ♦

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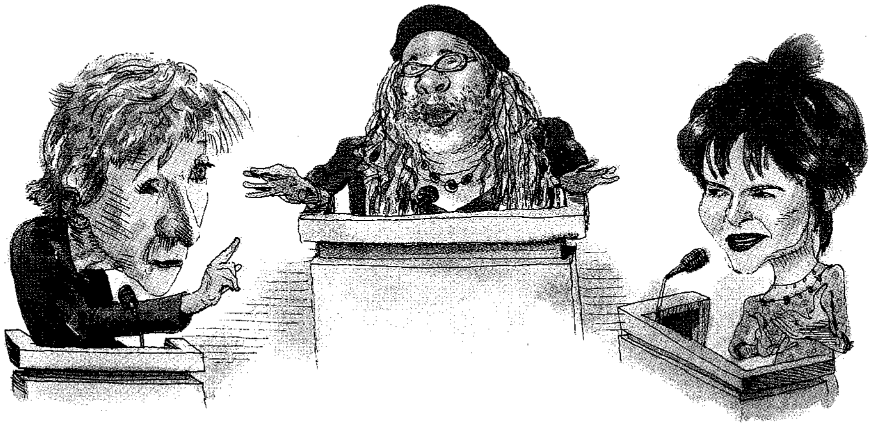
ELECTION 2000

Where everyone knows your name.

BY ANDY BOROWITZ

WITH a Bush and a Dole already in the race, it was only a matter of time before someone decided to roll the dice and see if the Dukakis name still had its magic. Newly announced candidate Olympia Dukakis has been crisscrossing Iowa spreading her gospel of Liberalism Without Being Too Liberal, and pledging that, if elected, she will stop playing annoyingly eccentric aunt roles.



Campaign experts believe that Dukakis may be riding high in the early polls because she has the same last name as 1988 Democratic nominee Michael Dukakis, but warn that those numbers could sink later on when people remember who Michael Dukakis actually is.

The name-recognition factor may have jump-started the Dukakis campaign, but it has not scared away another formidable candidate: George Clinton, the leader of the nineteen-seventies band Parliament/Funkadelic, who currently sits atop several surveys of likely Iowa voters. Clinton believes that his message of Conservatism the Way You Like It, Baby, is catching on with voters, and denies that his poll ratings are in any way tied to the fortunes of President Clinton, to whom he is not related.

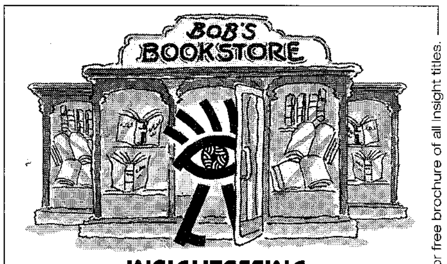
"George has his own body of work," said Clinton campaign spokesperson Sandy Grunwald. "Look at 'Atomic Dog.' Look at 'Cosmic Slop.' I think the American people would be hard-pressed to elect a President funkier than George."

Already deluged with appeals from Clinton and Dukakis, Iowans were not prepared for the introduction of yet another aspirant to the race: Merchant-Ivory regular Helena Bonham Carter. Ms. Bonham Carter, of course, is not related to former President Jimmy Carter, and claims not to have heard of him, but the confusion alone has given her a considerable bounce in the polls.

The acclaimed actress, whose political philosophy is called Centrism with a Wee Touch of Fascism, brushed aside criticism that she has no right to run for President since she is not an American citizen. "Blimey," she said. "I'm not going to get my knickers in a twist over that, you wanker."

Which candidate will Iowa choose? All bets may be off with the expected announcement this week of a new candidate: Torrance Ford, a car dealership in Southern California. While not technically a relative of former President Gerald Ford, nor technically a human being, Torrance Ford has successfully advanced a political philosophy called Moderation with Cash Back at Inception, which calls for no money down and a 3.9 per cent A.P.R., especially popular with suburban soccer moms. ♦

BARRY BLITT



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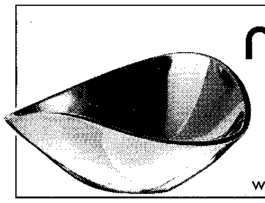

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ANNALS OF COMMUNICATIONS

WHAT I DID AT SUMMER CAMP

A reporter gets inside Herb Allen's C.E.O. retreat.

BY KEN AULETTA

Summer camp is a chance for a kid to play, to forge friendships, to escape his parents. For a media mogul, the five-day Sun Valley, Idaho, camp conducted for the past seventeen years by the investment firm Allen & Company offers similar advantages. There is a head counsellor and there are activity directors; each day has a morning activity period, canteen, then playtime and evening programs. The session culminates in an awards ceremony. This year, for the first time, an outsider, a reporter, was permitted to attend. This is my diary.

TUESDAY, JULY 6

THERE was no sweaty, noisy bus ride. Most of the three hundred or so adult guests and the hundred and thirty children accompanying them have come by private jet. By the end of the day, the fleet of Gulfstreams and Falcons parked on the tarmac is bigger than the air force of most of the Benelux countries. Waiting on the tarmac for each guest is a guide wearing shorts and an Allen & Co. shirt. The guides greet us by name (they memorized our faces from pictures we sent), fetch luggage, and direct us to our rented cars. My guide is Bob Dean, the vice-president of the risk-arbitrage department at Allen & Co.

To read the guest list is to savor the class list in "Lolita" but then to recognize the cast in the pages of *Forbes.* Among the C.E.O.-ish men and women arriving are Paul G. Allen, a co-founder of Microsoft, and now of Vulcan Ventures; C. Michael Armstrong, of A.T. & T.; Jeffrey Berg, of International Creative Management; Jeffrey P. Bezos, of Amazon.com; Michael R. Bloomberg, of Bloomberg L.P.; Warren E. Buffett, of Berkshire Hathaway; Stephen M. Case, of America Online; Michael Dell, of Dell Computer Corporation; Barry Diller, of USA Networks; William T. Esrey, of Sprint; William H. Gates III, of Microsoft; Donald and Katharine Graham, of the Washington Post Company; Andrew S. Grove, of Intel; Christie Hefner, of Playboy Enterprises; John S. Hendricks, of Discovery Communications; Nobuyuki Idei, of Sony; Steven P. Jobs, of Pixar Animation Studios and Apple Computer; Robert L. Johnson, of BET Holdings; Mel Karmazin, of CBS; Jeffrey Katzenberg, one of three DreamWorks SKG partners; Geraldine B. Laybourne, of Oxygen Media; John C. Malone, of the Liberty Media Group; Thomas Middelhoff, of Bertelsmann AG; Jorma J. Ollila, of Nokia; Sumner M. Redstone, of Viacom; Oprah Winfrey, of the Harpo Entertainment Group; Robert Wright, of NBC; and Jerry Yang, of Yahoo!

The camp is referred to, without irony, as "a family gathering," but the family has got quite big. Robert Strauss, the former Democratic National Chairman, has been a friend of Herbert Allen, the patriarch of the investment bank that bears his name, for thirty-five years. "I've been to every one of these," he tells me. "The first one was the best: thirty-five people and one speaker—me!" Strauss, who is eighty, loves coming here, and not just because his Washington law firm can garner clients here. "There's a bunch of people here I know are not the nicest people in the world," he says. "But *here* they're nice." Here is the Sun Valley Lodge, which is just outside the town of Ketchum, six thousand feet above sea level. The lodge was built in the thirties by Averell Harriman and his Union Pacific Railroad's millions. One begins to imagine this sort of gathering at the turn of the last century. Did Rockefeller go rafting with Carnegie?

When guests arrive, a small Allen & Co. army is waiting to pamper them. For the children, ninety of whom are twelve or younger, there are seventy-five babysitters and twenty activity directors, plus twenty nannies brought by the guests themselves.

Also awaiting each guest are two thick folders. In one are the daily schedules, for adults and for children. From Tuesday through Saturday, guests will be offered tennis, golf, fly-fishing, whitewater rafting, skeet shooting, massages, mountain biking. The kids may have an even better schedule: an ice-skating party, a wagon ride, a horse show, tennis clinics, a Wild West show, kickball, fishing, relay races, a raft trip, pizza and ice cream. Media moguls say that their sons and daughters have made lifelong friends here, engaging in junior networking.

Dress is casual. Except for Steve Jobs and Lachlan Murdoch, who often wear Bermuda shorts, jeans are the uniform of choice. Peter Barton, who once ran Liberty Media and stopped by this year to say hello to friends, points out that you can spot the regulars because they "move with calculated indifference" as they enter the lobby of the lodge; first-time guests enter and glance about like startled rabbits, clearly "titillated," he says. Regulars also bring sweaters, for the mountain air is chilly at night; first-timers like me catch colds. Photographers for Allen & Co. circulate at tonight's outdoor barbecue, taking pictures of the guests.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 7

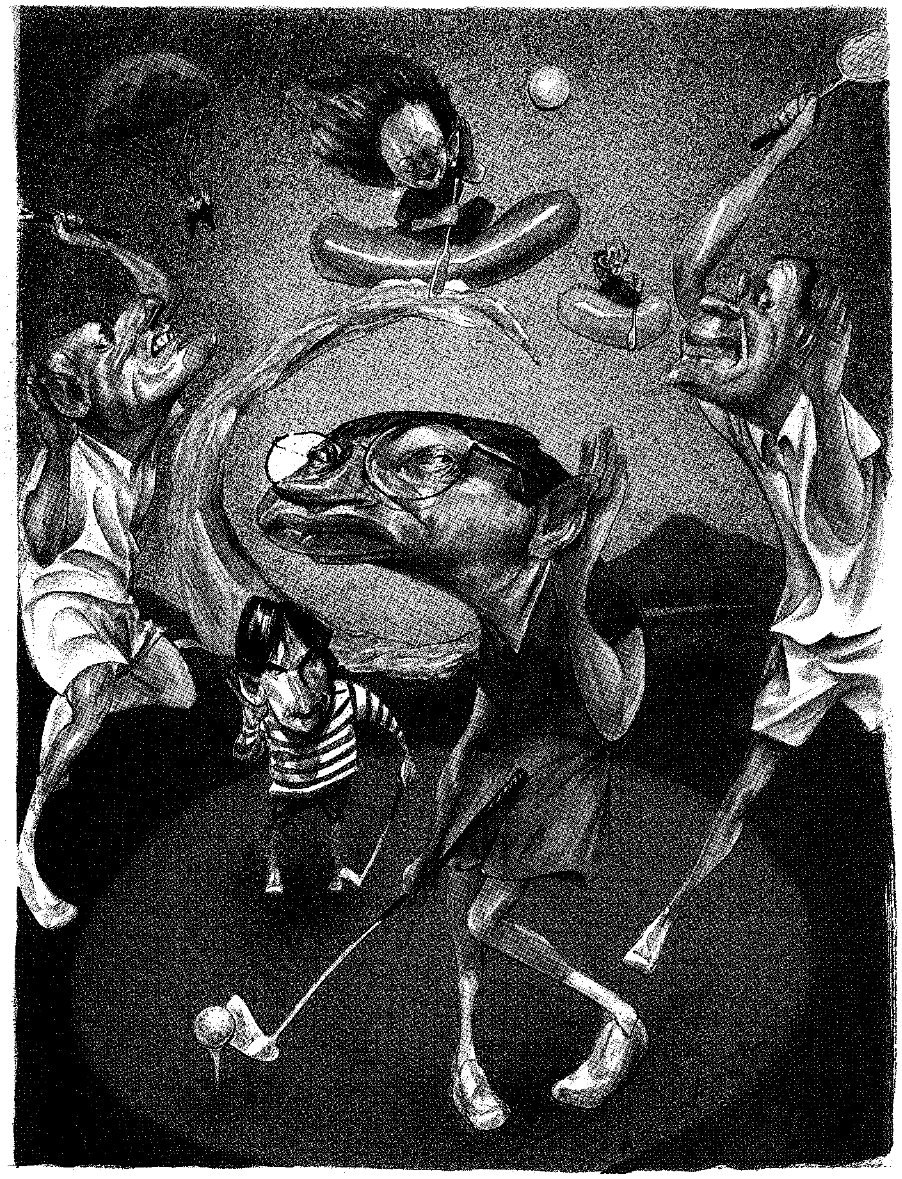
EACH morning's activity period consists of two or three presentations in the large conference center. These are preceded by a 6:45 A.M. buffet breakfast, which is eaten at round tables seating ten. The photographs taken the previous night fill two walls of the auditorium; everyone seems to be smiling.

Today, the first corporate presentation is by Charles B. Wang, the chairman and C.E.O. of Computer Associates International, a five-billion-dollar enterprise. Sony makes the second presentation. Howard Stringer, the C.E.O. of Sony America, says that Sony will ship seventeen million PlayStation game consoles this year; the new PlayStation II has enough microprocessing power to rival Microsoft's operating system and Intel's chip. When Stringer's boss, Nobuyuki Idei, speaks, he hastens to say that "Sony is basically a hardware company." Not that Idei was fooling Intel or Microsoft; it's just that a kind of Kabuki civility reigns at camp.

As does loot. Stringer has gifts for everyone: a digital Sony AM/FM stereo-cassette Walkman; a Discman; or a digital tape recorder. Last year, Microsoft gave away copies of their expensive WebTV. Millionaires stampede to snatch one—sometimes two—of Sony's elegant white shopping bags. They are motivated by what appears to be lust, and perhaps because it's almost playtime.

Twenty-five rafts wait at an embankment of the Salmon River, each manned by a professional guide and equipped with life jackets and oars. Herb Allen demands an additional accessory—three empty water buckets; he is determined to start a water fight. Water fights are a tradition. The former Sony America president Mickey Schulhof stopped in Ketchum to buy aluminum water cannons that squirt water great distances, and he hid them in his clothes. Who'd a thunk!

Everyone is laughing as we drift or bounce down the river, and notice Allen & Co. photographers perched on rocks. Ambulances quietly follow our progress. They were almost needed several years ago, when Rupert Murdoch fell in and quickly floated downstream and out of sight. He managed on his own to get to shore, but he'd had to scramble over the rocks and his legs were bloodied. This incident did not retard his enthusiasm for water sports and competition; indeed, when hikes were organized Murdoch is said to have hustled to the fore and stayed there, leaving his wife and others chugging after him. (This year, only a new wife and a honeymoon kept Murdoch away from camp.)



At Camp Allen, tycoons keep their ears to the ground (clockwise from center): Bill Gates, Steve Jobs, Barry Diller, Katharine Graham, and Michael Eisner.

STEVE BRODNER

THURSDAY, JULY 8

THERE are other leadership retreats: the Bilderberg conference; the World Economic Forum, in Davos; Bohemian Grove; investor conferences. Allen & Co.'s retreat, though, is longer than most. It is also confined mainly to a single industry—communications. And, most distinct of all, it includes families. There's one other difference, as Sumner Redstone points out: "This conference has a host in Herbert Allen"—a single figure who dominates, even as he shies away from the stage.

Many C.E.O.s have been attending the camp for most of its seventeen years, and, in addition, Allen has a large extended family. He has sons and nieces and nephews of his own and sons and daughters of close friends who work for Allen & Co. There are people he always invites because they're old friends: Bob Strauss and his law partner, Vernon Jordan, of Akin, Gump; former Vice-President Walter Mondale; former Senator Bill Bradley, who is running for President; Meredith and Tom Brokaw; Diane Sawyer; the producer Ray Stark, who first introduced Allen to Sun Valley; the actress Candice Bergen; the director Sydney Pollack. Then, he has people who always came when they headed powerful organizations, and he makes sure they keep coming, even though they're no longer in charge, such as James Robinson, the former C.E.O. of American Express, and Frank Biondi, the former C.E.O. of both Viacom and Universal. Allen gets upset at those who misbehave. A couple of years ago, Ronald Perelman both brought his own security detail and hired locals to protect him. No other C.E.O. comes with an aide, not to mention a security army, and Allen was mightily offended.

Allen, fifty-nine, is an unusual head counsellor. Unlike most investment bankers, he is a billionaire, yet in a business of salesmen he acts like a buyer. Day and night, he wears a cap pulled down to his ears. During the morning presentations, he sits off to the side near the front of the stage; he invites junior bankers to introduce all the speakers. One of the morning's presenters is an unshaven, black-turtlenecked Steve Jobs. Jobs talks about the importance of stories, of marrying technology and storytelling skills. Most computer geeks, he says, don't get it. "Silicon Valley thinks 'creative' is a bunch of guys sitting in a condo thinking up dirty jokes." But Hollywood, he says, doesn't get it, either: "Hollywood thinks technology is something you buy."

After the break, and more gifts, the first of two socially relevant panels is scheduled. Entitled "Unparalleled Prosperity and a Troubled Society," the panel is moderated by the charming Donald Keough, who joined Allen & Co. after serving as president of Coca-Cola. Little new ground is broken here, to say the least. Keough contrasts America's vibrant economy, where the "creation of wealth is incredible," with what he calls the "dark side to our society." Does the media, he asks, bear some responsibility for the violence?

The first speaker, Geraldine Laybourne, says, "There aren't enough fingers in this room to point at all the causes." Then she does what every panellist but Steve Case, of A.O.L., would do: change the subject. She says she wants to mention another problem: the "digital divide," or the gap between rich and poor in access to the Internet.

CBS's Mel Karmazin talks about going to high school in Hell's Kitchen. "There are more things we can do," he says, but the major culprit is guns, not the media. (The gun people have their own camp—and blame the media.) Barry Diller says, somewhat enigmatically, that although his job "is to entertain people," he also has "editorial responsibility." Steve Case adopts the bleakest view: "Obviously, things are getting worse, not better." Eighty per cent of teen-agers who are on A.O.L. say that what happened at Columbine could happen in their school. The media, he says, has to stop hiding behind the First Amendment. The central issue, he says, is this: Do we sacrifice profits to downplay violence? No one picks up this challenge.

Keough asks Barry Diller about the "Jerry Springer Show," which Diller's network owns. "We had said, 'Let's shut the show down,'" Diller says. But his network couldn't, because, internally, various executives had made mistakes. So he tightened the rules—no violence, period. The issue for him, Diller says, is that executives have to "be vigilant."

"You don't get credit for it," Karmazin says, congratulating Diller—and himself. CBS's radio stations, Karmazin continues, don't play gangsta rap. "We're expressing our First Amendment right not to play it." The Allen sessions are polite, so no one mentions that Karmazin's CBS distributes and airs the famously profane Howard Stern radio and television programs.

Laybourne laments media violence, then changes the subject again, boasting that Oprah Winfrey is planning to do a show for Oxygen, "so that we can help lead women in a positive direction." Redstone introduces a note of unhappy real-

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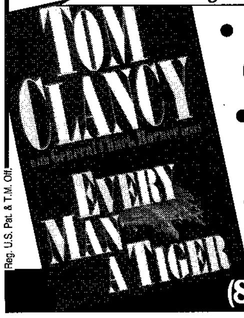

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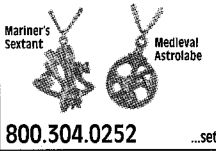

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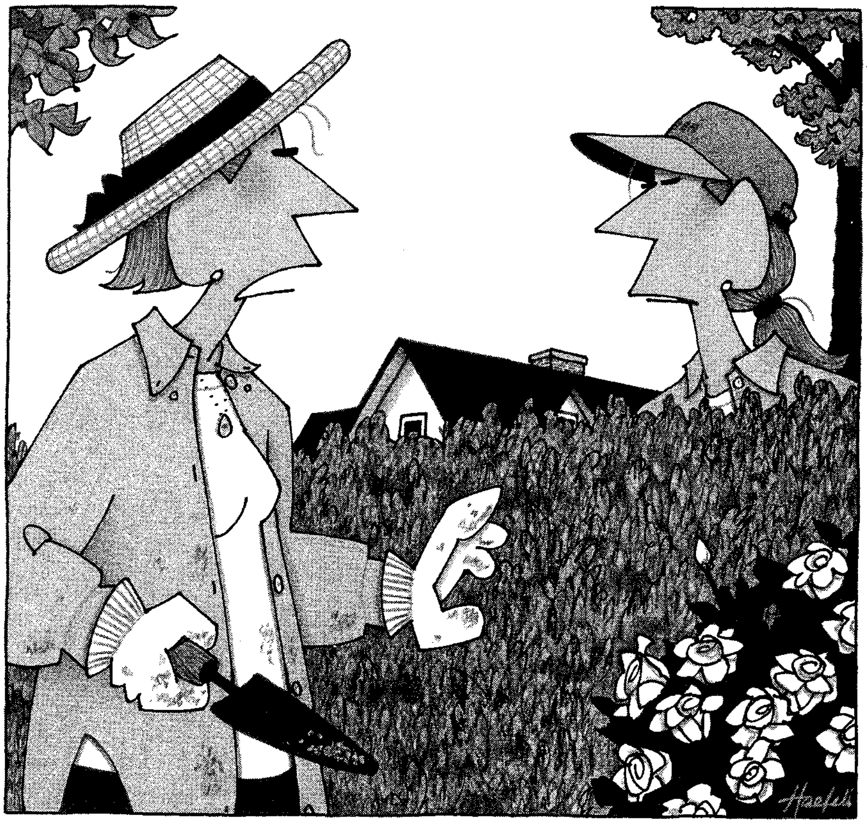

"We're thinking of moving to another part of the country—somewhere between Lyme disease and killer bees."

• •

ity: "One of our responsibilities is to make fiscally sound decisions." Translation: The shareholders come first. And Keough, at the end, inexplicably assures everyone, "No one here ducks his responsibility."

IN years past, Allen & Co. banned the press. Lately, it has allowed reporters on the grounds of the campus but keeps them away from all meetings, breaks, recreation, and evening activities. For many years, I'd asked Allen to allow me to cover the camp, and this year he relented, asking only that I display discretion by not poking a tape recorder into the faces of campers, for example. I was on the guest list both as an author and as a writer for this magazine.

Shyness with the press does not include the fourth annual photograph of media movers, to be taken on Friday by the photographer Annie Leibovitz for *Vanity Fair.* Allen takes care to tell guests who inquire that he has nothing to do with who is selected. Allen & Co. simply gives the magazine the guest list, and editors choose their own media élite. Thirty-two will make the Media All-Star team and appear for tomorrow's session; as hard as Allen tries to shake the perception that he influences the list, various campers intensely lobby him to be included in the picture. (After this year's photograph is taken, Allen will turn to Leibovitz and say, "*Vanity Fair* has been great to us . . . this is my last picture." "Never say never," Leibovitz will tell him, gently. "I'll say it," Allen will reply.)

When I get back to the lodge after tennis this afternoon, the elevator door opens and Sumner Redstone, whom colleagues often describe as self-absorbed, appears. He does not say hello or pause but announces, "You can see me on CNN. I'm on now!"

FRIDAY, JULY 9

WHY do they come to camp? Clearly, campers have fun. But there are other reasons: "Insecurity is one motivation," Peter Barton answers. "It says you're a player. The inviter here is the kingmaker. If you're here, it says to everyone else that you're in the game." That's only one motivation, he continues. "The presentations are brain food. You're socializing with people you dream to have a social opportunity with. And at the same time you know that

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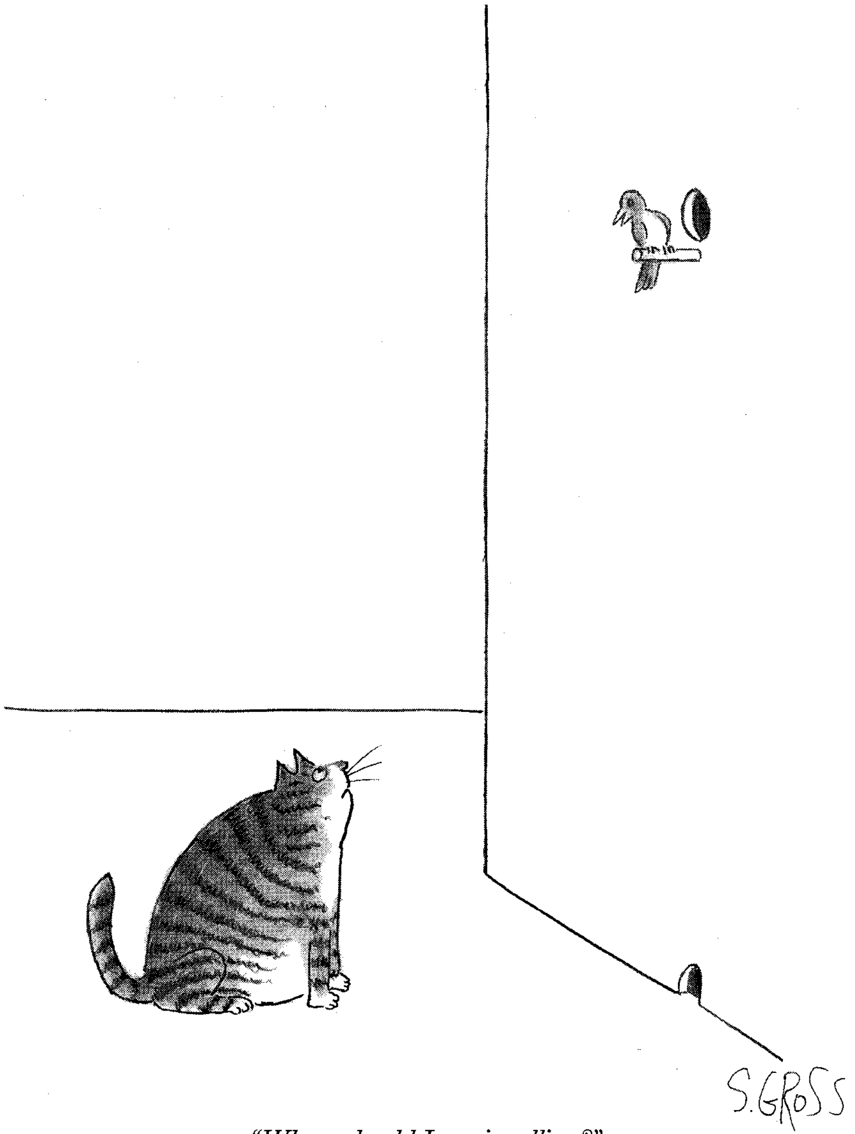
your wife and kids, who are with you, are separately having a wonderful time."

They come, said Howard Stringer, of Sony, because of the peculiar nature of the communications industry. "Everything changes so fast. No one can keep up with innovation or transactional options. This is the only place where all the information-technology leaders converge." Major business deals have been orchestrated, or provoked, at this retreat. It was here, over golf in 1995, that Michael Eisner made his first pitch to buy Cap Cities/ABC, culminating three weeks later in a nineteen-billion-dollar acquisition. It was here, after negotiations had collapsed earlier, that Rupert Murdoch reached an agreement in 1996 to purchase Ron Perelman's television stations. It was here, in 1997, that Murdoch and Gerald Levin of Time Warner ended the feud between their companies.

A number of C.E.O.s get in touch with the people they want to see before arriving and pack their schedule tight with appointments. Sony's Idei, who was here for only two days, had a plan that kept him mostly indoors. Thomas Middelhoff, of Bertelsmann, flew to Sun Valley from Germany, a trip that took eighteen hours. He was able to schedule meetings in Sun Valley that spared him from taking many separate trips.

On Friday morning, Michael Armstrong, of A.T. & T., makes the first presentation. He looks like a picture-perfect C.E.O. Dressed in a beige crew-neck sweater over a blue oxford shirt and tan slacks, Armstrong is a commanding presence, his left hand in his pocket, his right resting on the podium, his voice deep. He offers startling facts, including this one: Since he was hired by A.T. & T., less than two years ago, he has spent a hundred and forty billion dollars to acquire companies and to relieve A.T. & T. of its dependence on long-distance telephone service, which is a slow-growth business.


"Whom should I say is calling?"

After a break, there is a panel entitled "The Internet and Our Lives," which is moderated by Tom Brokaw and consists of Jeff Bezos, of Amazon.com, Jerry Yang, of Yahoo!, Jay Walker, of Priceline.com, and Michael Dell, of Dell Computer. Is the Internet another tulip craze? (No.) Will retail shopping survive? (Yes.) Do brand names matter in this strange new world? (Maybe.)

Friday evening is usually when the camp's awards ceremony takes place. This is the occasion for Jack Schneider, one of Allen's partners, to get up and roast the various campers, giving out mock awards, such as a Team Viagra T-shirt. This year, Allen cancelled the roast. Schneider thinks that it's because there were reporters who might learn what he said, and it might be embarrassing; Allen says that it's because the group is so big that the remarks would lose their intimacy, and, besides, he's tired of the same jokes.

Something else has changed the mood: the center of gravity at Sun Valley has shifted from old media to new. Jokes about Michael Ovitz are passé. So this year's buffet dinner on the lawn beside the pool is less raucous. There are no speeches. At one table, Melinda and Bill Gates dine with Gates's rival Steve Case and his wife, Jean, and are joined by the president of Walt Disney International, Robert A. Iger, and his wife, Willow Bay, and by Susan and Michael Dell. Michael Ovitz, who has not been very visible and who has been here for only two days, sits beside Katharine Graham.

SATURDAY, JULY 10

AT 7:30 A.M., Herb Allen speaks for the first time, introducing his friend of three decades, Bill Bradley. "Why Bill Bradley? The only answer I have is to invoke personal privilege." Bradley is relaxed, comfortable, and focussed as he speaks about children and family structure to a crowd of potential campaign donors that could finance a government, not to mention a candidate. At 8:30 A.M., Warren Buffett speaks. A shambly man, in a beige V-necked sweater over a red flannel shirt and wrinkled tan slacks, the legendarily shrewd investor gives a talk, with slides, centered on overvalued stocks. The stock market is no god, he suggests. In the short run, the market "is a voting machine," he says. "In the long run, it's a weighing machine," and what carries the most weight is a stock's value, not its hype. He believes that the stock market today is inflated, and unlikely to continue its meteoric rise. He flashes on the screen a chart of the Fortune 500 companies that constitute seventy-five per cent of America's corporate wealth. In 1998, corporate profits totalled $334.3 billion, yet the market value of these companies was ten trillion dollars. No way, he cautions, will this market value continue to rise as it has. Then he clicks to a slide marked "U.S. Horse Population." In 1900, there were seventeen million horses; in 1998, only five million. The lesson: Don't forget the losers.

Buffett tells the story of the oil prospector who died and went to Heaven. He asked St. Peter for a place, but St. Peter said there was no more room in the pen set aside for oil prospectors because there were too many of them in Heaven.

"Do you mind if I say four words?" the oil prospector asked.

O.K., St. Peter said.

"Oil discovered in Hell!" the oil prospector cried.

With that, the prospectors all fled, and St. Peter said, "The pen's all yours."

"No, I think I'll go along with the rest of the boys. There may be some truth to that rumor."

Buffett says, "That's how I feel about the stock market."

THE camp farewell takes place at dinner at the River Run Lodge, which is tucked into the side of a ski mountain. It's a sit-down dinner, and Herbert Allen chooses to sit with his old friends: Ray Stark, Candice Bergen, Sydney Pollack, and Allen's son Herbert, among others. Wearing jeans and a purple shirt, Allen, who is rail-thin, steps to the microphone and begins thanking people, starting with Stark, who is now eighty-three, all the speakers, and members of the Allen & Co. "family." It is a heartfelt note on which to end. No summer camp, however, concludes without a talent show, and after dinner Susie Buffett, with her husband, Warren, bouncing along to the rhythms of the Big Band sound, belts out four songs. Then it's back to the lodge for an ice-skating show, followed by a fireworks display. Something Buffett has said sticks in my mind: "If it weren't for Herbert, my family wouldn't get a summer vacation." ♦

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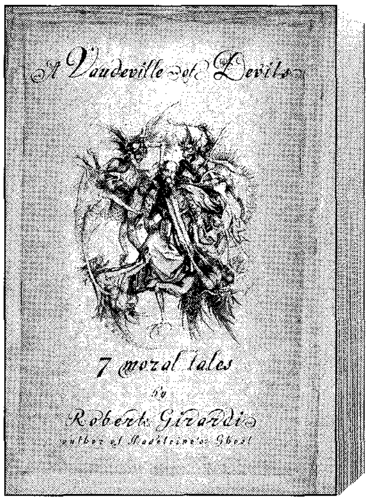

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PROFILE

SCION OF THE TIMES

How Arthur Sulzberger, Jr., has struggled to keep the family newspaper what it was—and what it must become.

BY SUSAN E. TIFFT AND ALEX S. JONES

IN January, 1992, the directors of the New York Times Company agreed, with mixed emotions, to support Arthur Ochs (Punch) Sulzberger's choice of his son, Arthur, Jr., to succeed him as the newspaper's next publisher. Although the elder Sulzberger had made his preference clear three months earlier, the board members had delayed making a decision. They didn't know the younger Sulzberger well, but what they had seen of him was a personality that was markedly different from his father's. Punch Sulzberger was a quiet, self-effacing leader, with an abiding respect for the paper's traditions and with an aversion to conflict; his son was confrontational and brash, a young man who relished his self-image as a child of the sixties. The directors were so uncomfortable with the younger Sulzberger that they got assurances that his appointment as publisher did not mean that he would, in time, automatically inherit his father's two other titles—those of company chairman and chief executive officer. In the end, however, the directors' fears were allayed, and on the morning of January 16th they ratified Arthur's succession as publisher.

In a ceremonial moment in the company's fourteenth-floor boardroom, the two Sulzbergers—father followed by son—walked to a lectern under a portrait of Adolph S. Ochs, the family patriarch. A winter wind howled outside. Just as Punch was introducing Arthur as his successor, one of the sash windows shot open, sending a blast of air into the room and knocking a photograph of the late Shah of Iran off a side table and onto the floor. "The spirit of Adolph Ochs!" one board member said, in mock horror. While several executives struggled to close the window, Arthur quipped nervously, "I hope that's not an evaluation of my fitness to be publisher."

That issue is no longer in question. In a remarkably short time, Arthur has grown into a serious, self-disciplined executive and has been responsible for bringing more changes to the *Times* than anyone since his great-grandfather Adolph Ochs, who bought the paper more than a century ago. During the past seven years, Arthur has created several highly effective new sections at the paper, including one called Circuits, which is entirely devoted to cyberspace. He has introduced color photography to the news pages of a paper that had long been known as the Good Gray Lady. He has promoted a boldness—some critics would say a shrillness—of opinion on the paper's editorial and Op-Ed pages. And he has prodded editors into broadening the paper's news coverage to an unprecedented degree in an effort to appeal to a younger, more diverse readership. (He once remarked that if older white males were alienated by his hipper version of the *Times* then "we're doing something right.")

Most important, he has radically changed the *Times'* corporate culture by encouraging the hiring of more minority employees; by promoting more women to executive positions; and by demanding teamwork and open communication in a work atmosphere that was notorious for its backbiting and petty rivalries. He has also demonstrated an ability to make tough decisions. He recently removed his first cousin and best friend Dan Cohen as senior vice-president of advertising, and last week he set aside the feelings of another newspaper family when he replaced Benjamin Taylor, the publisher of the Boston *Globe,* which the company bought in 1993, with a veteran *Times* executive, Richard H. Gilman. The Taylors had run the *Globe* for more than a century.

Two years ago, Arthur succeeded his father a second time, when he became chairman of the New York Times Company—a position giving him final authority over a business his family considers a sacred trust. Now the forty-seven-year-old publisher and chairman is faced with two critical matters. One is the question of who should succeed Joseph Lelyveld as the paper's next executive editor. At the moment, there are two front-runners for the job—Howell Raines, the strong-minded editorial-page editor, and Bill Keller, the managing editor. The other challenge is more daunting: how to make the *Times* a force on the Internet without sacrificing the integrity that readers have come to expect from the world's most influential newspaper.

OVER seven years of research for a biography of the Sulzberger family, we had many interviews with Arthur, as well as with other family members and *Times* journalists and executives. During our conversations with Arthur, he was both open and defensive, visionary and stubborn, thoughtful and bombastic. It became clear that, despite the advantages of his birth, his life has been marked by difficulty. His early years were spent as a child of divorce, and he has single-mindedly pursued a career in the one arena in which he can never escape the charge that he got where he is because of nepotism. "Arthur is going to go through his whole life with something to prove,"

Sulzberger: His greatest challenge is how to lead the Times into the hazardous age of the Internet. Photograph by Martin Schoeller.

SABA

Anna Quindlen, a friend and former *Times* columnist, told us. "Every day, he wakes up and thinks, How can I show them today that I am the man I want to be?"

Although he can be a voluble extrovert, Arthur is a private man, who is little known outside a close circle of friends and associates. Unlike his father, who has been a trustee of Columbia University and the chairman of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, he has refused to join the boards of prominent cultural institutions or philanthropies. On weekends, he pursues his great passion of rock climbing, in the Shawangunk Mountains near his country house in New Paltz, New York.

When we interviewed Arthur one day in November, 1997, he was in an expansive mood. Earlier that morning, he had presided over a meeting of the company's board of directors—his first such meeting as chairman—and he felt that it had gone well. We met him in the publisher's office, which still gave evidence of the youthfulness and informality he had sought to convey when he first became the head of the newspaper. On a sleek, modular desk was a gold-handled sword, a representation of Excalibur, embedded in a rock of clear glass—a present from his sisters, Karen, Cathy, and Cynthia. Across the room was a vintage movie poster advertising John Wayne in "Sands of Iwo Jima." It seemed an odd choice for someone who disdains the traditional macho stereotype. Arthur still had the lean build, baby face, and curly brown hair that had prompted even his secretary to refer to him as "the kid" when he first became publisher. Having a dandy's penchant for bold-striped shirts and colorful ties, he had distinguished himself from the sober dress style favored by *Times* executives; on this day, his suit, a gray pinstripe, was set off by suspenders decorated with the Statue of Liberty and exploding fireworks.

When a call came in, Arthur put on a headset and answered with a curt "Sulzberger!" The call was short, and, once we were seated around a green-veined marble coffee table, he flung his leg over the arm of his chair as if he were at home watching television.

We began by asking how he thought he had changed during his five-year journey from publisher to chairman. "The 'm' word," he said—"maturity." He wasn't reluctant to mention some of the stumbles he had made on his way up. "I take my shots and that's O.K.," he said, with a shrug. "I've learned that it hurts and then you move on. I cared about whether people thought I was lazy, dumb, ugly, mean—I mean, some real, basic things that everybody cares about. When you walk into a company that your father owns, you're always going to care about whether you're perceived as being a lightweight."

Embracing the sixties: Arthur, in headband, with June Tauber Golden and Dan Cohen at a family wedding in 1971.

COURTESY OF JUNE T. GOLDEN

He took off his watch and showed us an inscription on the back: "Live long and prosper," the famous greeting by "Star Trek" 's Mr. Spock. "My favorite episode of 'Star Trek: The Next Generation' is the one in which the captain gets a chance to relive his youth," he told us. "He vows to not make the mistakes of exuberance that he made then. So the greatest mistake in his life never takes place, because he doesn't allow it to take place. And when he's whisked back [to the present], he's an underling. An underling! It's an amazing story, because what he learns is that those mistakes were what helped define him—the things that pushed him a little bit, that got people saying, 'This is somebody you've got to start watching.' I'm not saying this is my story. I was born to all this. But the fact is that if you start second-guessing your youth and the way you've behaved . . . " He paused, apparently not wanting to make too much of the analogy. Then he went on, "Have I changed? Of course. My position has changed. My job has changed. My sense of self has changed. All I really mean to suggest is that I knew what I wanted, and I knew what it would take to get here. As long as I had the ability, I mean. When you really love something, you can get away with a lot more than if you seem to be just going through the paces. This is what I was born to do. I don't mean '*born* born' to do—I mean I'm good at this! I may not succeed at this, but I'm good at it."

WHEN Adolph Ochs, the son of poor German-Jewish immigrants, bought the *Times*, in 1896, he made a place in the business for every brother-in-law and son-in-law, every nephew and distant cousin who wanted to work there. More than a century later, this sense of the *Times* as a family enterprise persists, despite its expansion into a publicly traded $2.9-billion company that includes, besides the *Globe*, twenty-one regional newspapers, eight network-affiliated television stations, and two New York radio stations. In the company's two-tiered system of stock ownership, the family controls the board of directors and makes up a significant proportion of its membership (currently, four members out of fourteen). Even the Sulzbergers who are distant from journalism—one of Arthur's cousins is a scientist working at the National Zoo, another rebuilds car engines at a shop of his own in Maine—feel almost umbilically connected to the *Times*. "We" had a good piece in the Sunday paper, they will say, or "we" ran a good story.

This proprietary feeling runs as deep

in Arthur, in his three sisters, and in their nine cousins, who make up the family's fourth generation of owners, as it runs in Punch Sulzberger and in his three sisters, Marian, Ruth, and Judith. "The family," as its members refer to themselves, sets policy on everything from matters of donations to charities to procedures for training the fifth generation to participate in the company. The Sulzbergers are a resolutely private and modest bunch. To say that one has a "big head" is a stinging rebuke. Ostentatious displays of wealth are frowned upon. A family newsletter called "The Lookout," which is produced by a cousin of Arthur's, includes the poetry and the drawings of aunts, uncles, and grandchildren, and also a monthly reminder of birthdays and anniversaries.

ARTHUR'S immediate family was not the easiest one to grow up in. "When I view my childhood, I see things as very misty," he told us. "I can't explain why that is. I don't think of myself as a serious child. I'd like to think I was fun-loving. . . . But I confess that through most of my childhood I was in a fog."

When Arthur was born, in 1951, Punch was a twenty-five-year-old reservist in the Marines who was just beginning two years of active duty in Korea and in Washington. In 1953, he took his young wife, Barbara, and their two children—a daughter, Karen, had recently been born—to Wisconsin, where, through family connections, he had got a job as a cub reporter at the Milwaukee *Journal.* After a year's apprenticeship in the Midwest, Punch was sent to the *Times'* Paris bureau as a correspondent-in-training. Exhausted by the moves and the care of two toddlers, Barbara was hospitalized for depression. After her recovery, she began an affair with Don Cook, a reporter for the *Herald Tribune,* in Paris. One day, Punch came home from an assignment earlier than expected and found his wife with Cook. The affair effectively ended the marriage, and when Punch and Barbara returned to New York, in 1955, he moved in with his parents, and Barbara settled herself and the children in temporary quarters in Port Chester, New York. Years later, in a rare moment of personal candor, Punch admitted to a *Times* executive that one of the hardest days of his life had been when he was saying goodbye to his children after a visit and Arthur had cried out, "Please don't go, Daddy!" In December, 1956, a month after his divorce from Barbara, Punch married Carol Fox Fuhrman, a divorcée with a seven-year-old daughter.

Arthur was an unprepossessing child—small for his age, afflicted with allergies, and lacking in self-confidence. Until the age of fourteen, he lived in his mother's relatively modest fourth-floor apartment, on East Seventy-fourth Street. Every other weekend, he and Karen visited their father's spacious apartment at 1010 Fifth Avenue, where they slept on a pullout sofa bed. In the summer, they decamped to Hillandale, the Sulzberger family compound, in Stamford, Connecticut. Punch, who had suffered from a distant father himself, was not given to displays of physical affection. His ways of connecting with his son were to take him to movies and Chinese restaurants, and to teach him how to make tiled ashtrays and clay bowls in a pottery workshop he had installed in a converted maid's room.

When Arthur was seven, his mother married David Christy, a New York businessman. "David was a very hands-on father," Arthur recalls. "He'd be out there teaching you how to ride a bike, and later on how to drive a stick-shift Volkswagen, bumping along country roads. He played a very important role in my life." At their mother's request, Arthur and Karen called their stepfather "Dad."

Still, the differences between life in the Christy apartment and weekends with Punch and Carol were pronounced. For years, on the rare occasions when Arthur and Karen were taken out to dinner at a neighborhood restaurant, their mother and stepfather insisted that they share an entrée. Recalling vacations with her father, Karen says, "It was wonderful. You could go to the hotel dining room and order off the menu."

Arthur was determined to get closer to his father. To begin ninth grade, he went off to Punch's old boarding school, Loomis, in Windsor, Connecticut. Punch had been so unhappy there that he joined the Marines rather than repeat his sophomore year. Arthur quickly realized that he, too, had made a mistake. "My overriding memory of Loomis," he told us, "is of sitting in my room with my feet up on the radiator in the middle of winter, with snow on the ground, and trying to stay warm on a Sunday afternoon, and saying, 'I could be in New York. What am I doing here?' " In March of his freshman year, he left Loomis.

When he returned to New York, he made the bold decision to move out of his mother's apartment and to live with his father and stepmother, hoping, he said, to get beyond "the every-other-weekend-divorced-child syndrome." He was also seeking a closer connection with the extended Sulzberger clan. "I had another family here that I had really never gotten to know in any serious way," he recalled.

Punch told us that he was "just absolutely delighted" that his son wanted to join the household, and, at the time, he didn't question whether the move had any larger meaning. "Maybe Arthur thought the grass was greener on our side of the fence, or maybe he wasn't getting along that well with his mother or stepfather," he said. Still, the elder Sulzberger remained an aloof figure to his son. On week nights, he was often out at business functions rather than at home for dinner, and on weekends he preferred to putter in the garden rather than shoot baskets in the driveway with his son.

From an early age, Arthur had declared that it was his intention to become a newspaperman. The summer after he moved in with his father, he went off to camp carrying Punch's battered typewriter case, which was identified as the property of "A. O. Sulzberger, the New York *Times.*" Many years later, his stepmother, Carol, said, "If I had to name one moment when the bells rang, that would have been it." Dan Cohen, the Sulzberger cousin who was closest in age and interests to Arthur, had an even stronger impression of his friend's ambitions. "He wanted to be the publisher of the New York *Times* for as long as I can remember," Cohen recalled. "There was nothing else in Arthur's life that he wanted to do."

After leaving Loomis, Arthur repeated the ninth grade at the Browning School, on East Sixty-second Street. There he joined the debating club and

"Good news. The test results show it's a metaphor."

became known for his acerbity. "I was four feet two inches forever," he recalled. "I think that probably did for me what it does for many short people, which is to make you rely a little more on your own wit. You get out of situations by using humor." If debating taught him how to exploit others' weaknesses, it also gave him, he said, "an eye for my own vulnerabilities." He added, "You don't want people to get too close."

In the summer of 1968, he worked as a clerk for the paper's metropolitan desk, but the experience did not bring him appreciably closer to his father. The following summer, a family friend, Griswold Smith, proposed that he sign up for Outward Bound, in the belief that he needed greater adult male attention, and a physical challenge as well. Arthur was skeptical. "I didn't embrace this," he recalled. "I had to be convinced that it wasn't the Marine Corps."

The experience marked a significant turning point. For twenty-six days in the Carolina mountains, Arthur and ten other boys slept in canvas bunks, cooked their meals over an open fire, and tramped into the woods for five- to seven-day expeditions. "They try to build that platoonlike sense of working together and caring about each other under conditions of stress," Arthur recalled. "You're exhausted, you're wet, you're cold, but you're with people who are just like you." His worst moment came during the "solo," when he was dropped off alone in the wilderness for three days with only half a day's rations and with some paper and a pencil for writing. "I hated it," he said. "I'd never been alone like that before, three days all by myself. I put up my little tarp, put my sleeping bag out, sat there and cried." Later, he described those weeks in the Carolina mountains as a time that lifted the "fog" of his childhood. He spray-painted his mountain boots silver and, in gratitude, sent them to Griswold Smith.

ARTHUR entered Tufts University in 1970, and there he concentrated on two subjects that he hoped might serve him well as a journalist—political science and international relations. As a child, he had required tutoring to cope with mild dyslexia—a disorder that afflicts several other members of the Sulzberger family—and in college he earned Bs and Cs.

Today, Arthur looks back on the early seventies as "a great time to go to college," mostly, it seems, for what was happening outside the classroom. "I was searching and pushing the limits," he said. He read the canonically hip literature (Kurt Vonnegut, Richard Brautigan), listened to the requisite music (the Jefferson Airplane, the Grateful Dead), and experimented with marijuana and hallucinogens.

He had been something of a political activist in high school—he had been suspended briefly from Browning for trying to organize a shutdown of the school following the National Guard's shooting of students at Kent State—and at Tufts he eagerly embraced the antiwar movement. His first arrest for civil disobedience took place outside the Raytheon Company, a defense and space contractor: there, dressed in an old Marine jacket of Punch's, he joined other demonstrators who were blocking the entrance to the company's gates. He was soon arrested again, in an antiwar sit-in at the J.F.K. Federal Building in Boston.

Punch had showed little reaction after the first arrest, but when he got word of the second one he flew to Boston. Over dinner, he asked his son why he was involved in the protests and what kind of behavior the family might expect from him in the future. Arthur assured his father that he was not planning on a career of getting himself arrested. After dinner, as the two men walked in the Boston Common, Punch asked what his son later characterized as "the dumbest question I've ever heard in my life": "If a young American soldier comes upon a young North Vietnamese soldier, which one do you want to see get shot?" Arthur answered, "I would want to see the American get shot. It's the other guy's country; we shouldn't be there." To the elder Sulzberger, this bordered on traitor's talk. "How can you say that?" he yelled. Years later, Arthur said of the incident, "It's the closest he's ever come to hitting me."

In 1973, Arthur spent the Thanksgiving holidays in Topeka, Kansas, where his mother was living with her third husband. There he reintroduced himself to Gail Gregg, a slim, dark-haired daughter of neighbors, whom he had met on an earlier trip home, and who was also looking forward to a career in journalism. When Arthur got back to Tufts, he sent Gail an airplane ticket to come visit him. She landed in Boston on January 3, 1974, moved in with him, and never used the return portion of her ticket.

After graduating from Tufts, in 1974, Arthur began his journalistic training in North Carolina, as a general-assignment reporter on the Raleigh *Times*. North Carolina was considered a breeding ground for good journalists, and Punch knew the Daniels family, who owned the city's two newspapers. Gail, meanwhile, had enrolled in the graduate school of journalism at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. Arthur was "absolutely, totally green," Mike Yopp, who was then the managing editor, recalled. "Can you imagine anyone who can't spell 'hate'?" Harold Muddiman, the city editor, laughed as he handed Yopp a page of Arthur's copy in which "hait" appeared twice. Like the paper's other cub reporters, Arthur made a hundred and fifty dollars a week. He rode to the office on a Kawasaki 900 motorcycle. Only his Porsche indicated that he had access to a grander style of life than that of his friends.

Arthur and Gail were married in Topeka, in May, 1975. The couple discouraged conventional gifts like china and silver, and instead of attending a traditional rehearsal dinner the guests gathered on the Greggs' lawn for a drunken game of volleyball. At the wedding, it was the groom, not the bride, who wore white: white pants, a white belt, and a white tuxedo shirt, open at the neck. Gail appeared in a sleeveless jade dress.

In 1976, Punch arranged reporting jobs in London for his son and daughter-in-law—Arthur with the Associated Press, Gail with United Press International. Arthur got around on a Triumph Tiger motorcycle, complete with a sidecar, and he often visited the *Times'* London bureau dressed in black leather and smoking a pipe. "I don't think any of us viewed him as the heir to Punch," Marian Underhill, the office manager, recalled. "He was quite confident, but he looked like such a kid."

Punch's performance as a foreign correspondent had been little more than desultory, but Arthur, during his two years overseas, proved himself to be a genuine reporter. In June, 1977, he covered an attack on gunmen who had hijacked a train and taken hostages in Assen, Holland. Because he was the only correspondent in the inner security perimeter, his eyewitness account of Dutch commandos storming the train was quoted in a front-page story in the *Times*. When he came home in the fall of 1978, he felt "secure" about his reporting skills, he told us. "It was time for me to join the *Times*."

ARTHUR started out as a general-assignment reporter in the paper's Washington office, and there Punch, in his understated way, encouraged the bureau chief, Bill Kovach, to look out for his son. Soon Arthur was asking Kovach to explain how and why he had instituted certain policies. "Kovach was just a wonderful boss," Arthur recalled. "He really focussed on developing people." In Arthur's own mind—if not in anyone else's quite yet—he was no longer the journeyman reporter he had been in Raleigh and in London but was now an executive trainee.

Jokes about him had preceded his arrival in the Washington bureau; reporters took to calling him "young Arthur" and "Pinch"—the latter a name he despised. "A man deserves his own nickname, and 'Pinch' is clearly my father's name, twisted," he said. Soon, however, he was at the center of a small clique of up-and-coming young *Times* reporters. Chief among them was an economics reporter named Steven Rattner. Along with five or six other reporters in the bureau, Arthur and Rattner formed a kind of brat pack. Kovach warned his protégé that he was making a mistake in consorting with such an exclusive group, but Arthur refused to distance himself from his friends. Later, after he became deputy publisher, Arthur took Kovach's advice to heart and made it a point not to fraternize with his old friends on the paper.

In the spring of 1981, Arthur, Gail, and their infant son, Arthur Gregg, moved to New York; once again, he found himself on general assignment. His ambition had been to arrive as an assistant metropolitan editor, but the paper's national editor, Dave Jones, persuaded him that so senior a title would undermine his credibility in the newsroom. "How many times do I have to pay my dues?" Arthur complained. "One more time," Jones assured him.

The following January, Arthur was in fact made an assistant metropolitan editor—his first real management position. He adopted the habit of walking

ESTATE SALE

around the newsroom without his shoes on, and he joined in the pervasive gossip about who was up or who was down at the *Times*. "I always felt that he was walking this very careful line and walking it well," Anna Quindlen, who was then a metro reporter, recalled. "On one side, being part of the newsroom, and, on the other, being inappropriate about an institution with which he had a radically different relationship from what any of us ever could or would have. I used to look at him sometimes and think, How do you do this?"

In the newsroom, Arthur came into direct contact with Abe Rosenthal, the temperamental executive editor. Although Arthur respected the high standards that Rosenthal had set for the paper, he deplored the capriciousness and fear that had, increasingly, come to characterize Rosenthal's management. Rosenthal's stated aim was to keep the *Times* "straight," by which he meant free of causes, special pleadings, and political agendas. However, for gay members of the news staff, "straight" had taken on a double-edged meaning. By the time Arthur arrived in the newsroom, the executive editor's emotional outbursts and squeamishness about gay culture had created an atmosphere of cowed silence among homosexual reporters. To protect their careers, they remained resolutely in the closet. Arthur decided to send a signal that this was one aspect of the Rosenthal regime which he didn't support.

In a single week, he took each of the handful of reporters on the metropolitan desk whom he knew to be gay out to lunch, one at a time. "So," he began the conversation, "what's it like to be gay at the New York *Times*?" After his guest had recovered his composure, Arthur went on to say that he considered it "crazy" for people to work together so closely and "not have this behind us." Denying one's sexual orientation, he added, is a "silly way to live our lives." As news of Arthur's "outing" made its way through the newsroom, the reaction among gays was one of relief. "They were grateful, and a little bit surprised, that I didn't give a shit about their sexuality," Arthur recalled. "That was probably the only time that I overstepped what might be considered a traditional boundary, but these were friends and colleagues." Soon he heard that his behavior was viewed not merely as a thoughtful act but also as a sign of how things might change when he became the publisher.

The pivotal moment in his rise came in the fall of 1982, when he left the newsroom and moved to the business side of the paper. "I knew that it was the right step to take, but I also knew that if I hated it I could always go back to being a reporter," he told us. This option was theoretical, at best. He was determined to be the publisher, and he knew that in order to get there he had to learn the mysteries of what his father sometimes quaintly refers to as "the counting house."

ARTHUR started out in the advertising department. He felt the typical newsman's discomfort with ad salesmen, and would have preferred to begin elsewhere, but Walter Mattson, the company's first president who was not also a family member, and whom Punch had asked to help oversee the training of the next generation of Sulzbergers, decreed otherwise. Mattson took pride in his working-class roots, and was bluntly contemptuous of nepotism. "Walter has a keen appreciation of the strength and stability that family ownership brings to the company," Michael Golden, a cousin of Arthur's, who became the vice-chairman in 1997, said. "But the notion that one of us gets moved ahead because we're a family member drives him crazy."

In 1985, Mattson pushed Arthur to attend the Program for Management Development at Harvard Business School. Arthur loathed it. ("I wouldn't want to work for the company [Harvard] wanted me to run," he later explained. "The school was interested in building wealth. I was interested in building value.") And he protested when Mattson detailed him to the production department, working days part of the week and nights the rest—a schedule that, he said, left him feeling like "a zombie." The job was equivalent to that of a factory manager. "If a fire breaks out, you're responsible," Arthur explained. "If there's a leak in the fourteenth-floor men's room, as there was one night, you're responsible. You're just everything." About a month after

"I may run, but first I want to toy with the electorate for a while."

GUESS YOUR SPERM COUNT
WIN
WEYANT

Arthur began working with the pressmen, Mattson asked him how it was going. "I've learned a lot," Arthur replied dryly. "I never knew you could use 'fuck' as an adjective, a verb, and a noun, all in the same sentence."

Among the handful of other fourth-generation Sulzbergers at the company, there were complaints that Punch's careful grooming of his son to become the next publisher was unfair. Michael Golden, who had his own ambitions for a top job, said that when he joined the company, in 1984, he was informed that there was no place for him at *Times* headquarters. Even though he had earned a journalism degree and an M.B.A., he would have to start in the magazine group. "They were just *delighted* to have me here," he recalled sarcastically.

Punch prompted further grumbling when he named his son assistant publisher, in 1987, and, a year later, when he made him deputy publisher—a position that gave Arthur the final word on business and editorial decisions whenever Punch was ill or out of town. For the first time, Arthur felt that the job of publisher was, as he put it, "mine to lose." Mattson called him "Deputy Dawg."

For years, Arthur had consciously kept his distance from his father, because he was fearful that people would try to influence the publisher through him. But now he reported directly to Punch, and the two men began talking with a new ease. Both of them shared a love of punctuality and order. One of Punch's sisters, Ruth Holmberg, liked to joke that her brother's idea of a good time was cleaning out her car. Every morning at six o'clock, Arthur worked out in a West Side gym with Steve Rattner. Then, by seven, Arthur was showered and dressed, and by seven-fifteen he was at his desk eating a toasted corn muffin.

There the stylistic similarities between father and son ended. Punch embodied the *Times'* traditional image of itself: calm, low-keyed, deceptively strong. He played at being naïve and slightly absent-minded, to give the impression that he needed people's help to get the job done. By contrast, Arthur dominated discussions to the point of arrogance. Max Frankel, who had succeeded Rosenthal as the executive editor in 1986, sometimes had to hold his tongue when the new deputy publisher made impetuous demands and remarks. "I'll say this about Arthur," Frankel joked privately, "he'll never make the same mistake three times."

On September 13, 1987, the *Times* published a thousand-six-hundred-and-twelve-page, twelve-pound Sunday paper, the largest edition in its history. Barely a month later, the Dow Jones industrial average dropped five hundred and eight points in a single day, setting off a recession that eventually cost the *Times* forty per cent of its annual advertising volume and sent the company's earnings into a free fall. It was in this atmosphere of crisis that Arthur made a close colleague of Lance Primis, the paper's general manager and resourceful advertising whiz.

PRIMIS, who was the son of first-generation Russian and East European immigrants, had grown up in middle-class neighborhoods in Brooklyn and Long Island, and had attended the University of Wisconsin at Madison on a baseball scholarship. After graduation, he had joined the Scott Paper Company, for which he sold toilet tissue to grocery stores throughout southern New York State and New Jersey. He started at the *Times* by taking orders for classifieds over the phone, and he was so awestruck by the institution that for a while he preserved in a scrapbook every ad he sold. "I couldn't believe that some toilet-tissue salesman was roaming these halls," he recalled. Persuading people to buy advertising proved to be Primis's singular talent. "He was always a salesman," Arthur said of him. "He was always on." In 1980, at the age of thirty-three, Primis was named the paper's advertising director. By 1991, he had become the president and general manager of the *Times,* and he was on the brink of taking over Walter Mattson's job as president of the Times Company.

Arthur and Primis often talked about the changes they would make when it became their turn to lead. Primis introduced Arthur to the management theories of Dr. W. Edwards Deming, an American business philosopher and a proponent of "total quality management," who emphasized the value of teamwork rather than competition. "I think Arthur not only deferred to Lance but he adored him and felt very comfortable with him almost immediately," a *Times* executive said of their relationship in those days.

The two men became rivals after

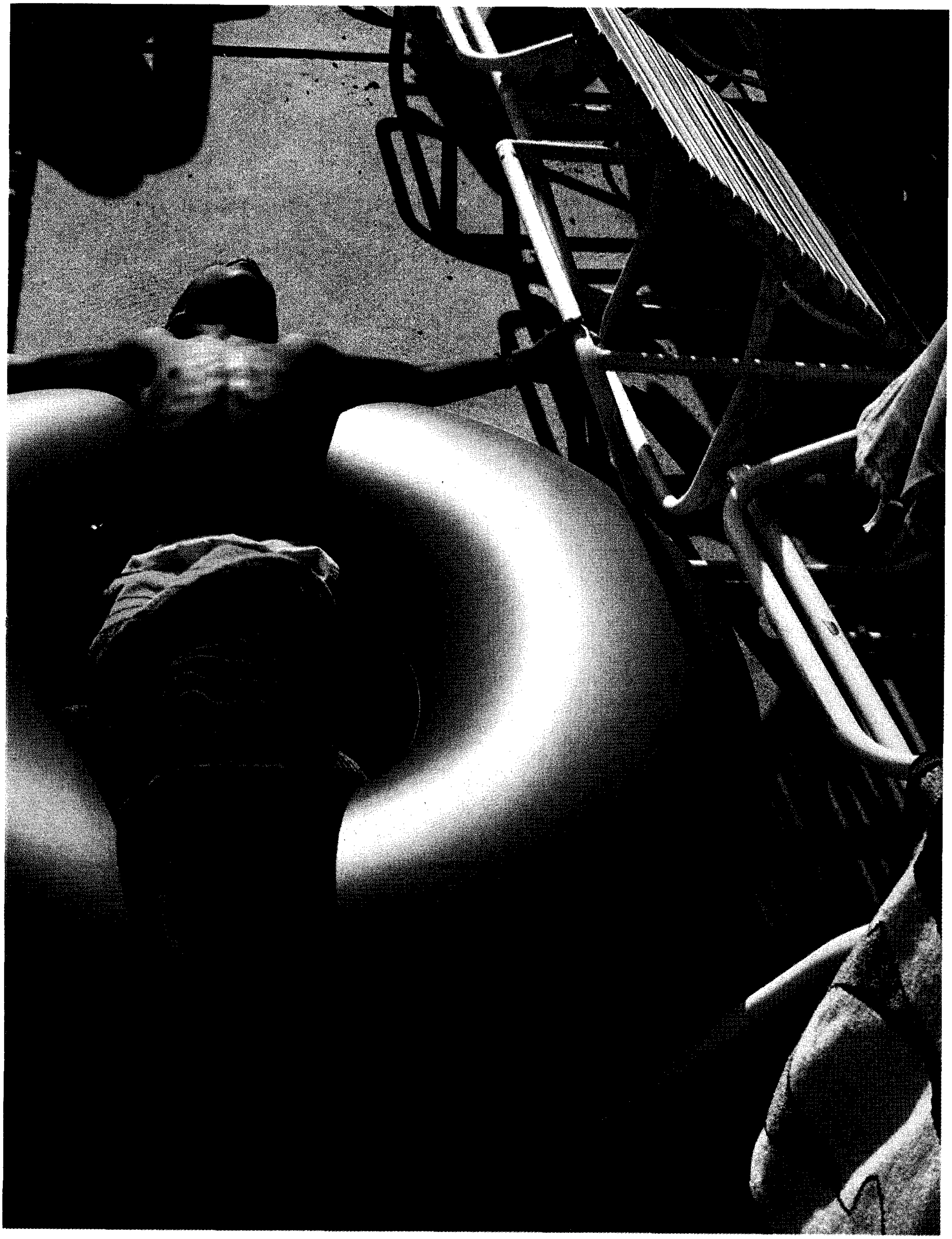
Arthur was made publisher, in 1992, and Primis replaced Mattson as company president, eight months later. Punch Sulzberger had long relied on the strength and steadiness of Mattson's leadership and had repeatedly tried to talk him out of taking early retirement. Punch was further discomfited by the fact that Mattson had made it nearly impossible to name as his successor anyone but Primis, a man whom Punch did not know well and who had not, he felt, been adequately trained for the presidency.

Arthur's activist approach was immediately felt on the editorial page, where he installed one of the paper's most combative journalists, Howell Raines, as the editor. Virtually overnight, the tone of the page sharpened. Bill Clinton complained to Arthur about the page's relentless criticism of the new Administration, whereupon Arthur replied that he liked to think of the *Times'* editorials as "tough love." Clinton said wearily, "Well, just don't forget the love part."

On the news pages, Arthur's most visible first move was the introduction of Styles of the Times—a new section, in the Sunday edition, designed to attract advertising from trendy downtown boutiques and to lure members of the MTV generation to the paper. *Time* magazine described Arthur unveiling the prototype and joking that "young readers had better like it because all the older ones would drop dead when they saw it." He was not wrong. Styles included coverage of gay rodeos, a clothing store that specialized in lace-up "bondage trousers," and the various joys of Billy Idol and cyberpunk. The Styles section quickly became the subject of jokes—and Arthur's first conspicuous failure.

The biggest gaffe in the inaugural edition was the lead piece—a look at the "body part as fashion accessory." It was illustrated by an oversized photograph of a woman's muscular bare arm and fist. Frankel, the executive editor, had chosen the picture instead of one for an alternative story about a backlash against the wearing of AIDS ribbons. "He wanted something up and frothy," Adam Moss, a young editor who had been brought in to help launch Styles, recalled. "The idea was to ape a woman's magazine." What neither

SHOWCASE: *A tube, a towel—he's not going anywhere. The photographer Jeff Mermelst*
Since then, the artist has turned his focus to Manhattan, his preferred workplace, where



tured this young bather in repose at a water park in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, in 1989, as part of a series called "Summer."
ed for twenty years. His first book, comprising a twelve-year series of New York street photographs, will be published in the fall.

"All outdoor carpeting can be indoor carpeting, but not all indoor carpeting can be outdoor carpeting."

Frankel nor the other senior editors realized was that the picture could be construed as referring to a marginal gay sex practice. At the seventieth-birthday party of the former managing editor Arthur Gelb, Abe Rosenthal cracked in a toast, "I knew we were in a new age when I saw the first edition of Styles of the Times. Not only did it give New York the finger, it gave it the whole arm."

Soon, advertisers began to withdraw from the new section, and in June, 1994, Styles was quietly folded into the back of the Sunday Metro section. (A more restrained version has since been revived as a stand-alone section called Sunday Styles.)

Punch believed that his son had to learn by his mistakes, but his forbearance was severely tested when, in the spring of 1994, Arthur, without his father's knowledge, saw to it that the paper's new contract with the Newspaper Guild provided health insurance and other benefits for same-sex couples. The "domestic partners" provision fulfilled a promise that Arthur had made two years earlier to the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association, but to Punch it came as a distasteful surprise. He learned of the groundbreaking change only when he read about it in the New York *Observer*. "He has a right to be pissed at me," Arthur admitted. "I finagled it; I did an end run." But he added, with a tone of moral certainty, "My father's position on [gay benefits] is wrong."

WHILE Arthur bobbed and weaved as a fledgling publisher, Primis began his own campaign for change on the business side. What the company needed was, as he put it, "professional management"—shorthand for no family interference. In this, he was influenced by Louis V. Gerstner, Jr., the chairman of I.B.M., who, as a Times director, was pushing hard at board meetings for "shareholder value"—the catchphrase for higher earnings, quarter after quarter. As the ownership of Times stock became more widely held, Primis believed, pension funds and other institutional investors would demand the sort of high returns that only a management uninfluenced by the traditions and constraints of family ownership could provide. "Take Punch out of the equation and put Lou Gerstner in charge of the company as the chairman of the board, what would really change at the New York *Times*?" he said to us when we raised the issue of who should succeed Punch as the company's chairman and C.E.O.

Had Primis achieved notable success as president, his case for professional management might have been more compelling, but he seemed to have no coherent vision for the company beyond what he had read in the latest books on management; his initiatives were scattered and out of keeping with the Times Company's fundamental nature. In 1994, and without informing the elder Sulzberger, Primis announced that the company intended to bid for Madison Square Garden—an idea Punch considered absurd. Primis then embarked on a plan to capitalize on the Times-owned magazine *Golf Digest* by building a series of driving ranges. Symbolically, Primis's biggest blunder was to build a showcase office for himself, just at the height of the company's belt-tightening period during the mid-nineties. The office, which was rumored to have cost a million dollars, was derided at the paper's headquarters, on West Forty-third Street, as "the Taj Mahal." Primis seemed impervious to the criticism, pointing to the fact that his tough cost-cutting had caught Wall Street's attention, and that the company's stock price was ticking upward.

By the spring of 1996, Punch was in a state of dismay about Primis. In Punch's opinion, Primis had taken a shortsighted and narrowly profit-driven view of shareholder value. Moreover, Primis seemed to disdain the Sulzbergers' deeply held notion of themselves as stewards of the *Times*. From the very first, Primis had made it clear that he considered Arthur inadequate to fill his father's shoes. "We've got to keep Arthur at the newspaper," he cautioned other executives in private. "We can't let him try to influence the direction of the company." He had also put obstacles in the path of Michael Golden, whose

Very funny
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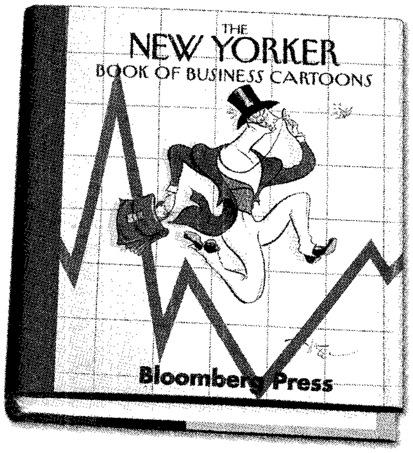

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bra years of the family's ownership of the *Times*. Primis regarded the affair as purely a social bash, at which he wouldn't be missed, and he went to Paris to attend a board meeting of the *International Herald Tribune* and then to vacation with his wife and children. Three months later, in September, Primis was let go.

We happened to interview Primis in his palatial office on the afternoon before he was fired, and we found him in a confident mood. He was trimmer and calmer than when we had last seen him, and he had abandoned a nervous habit of bouncing on his feet. “I think we're defining the business better—we have a tighter strategy,” he said. The next day, after the board had acted, a sombre Punch came into Primis's office. “He was troubled and pained,” Primis later recalled. “I knew exactly what he was going to do when he walked in the door.” Punch was straightforward. He had got his mind around succession, he said, and he wanted a No. 2 who was harmonious with him, with his family, and with what they wanted to do in the future. Primis wasn't working out. He and the company would have to part—immediately. Primis maintained that he

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ur's childhood, his step-
Carol Sulzberger, had been
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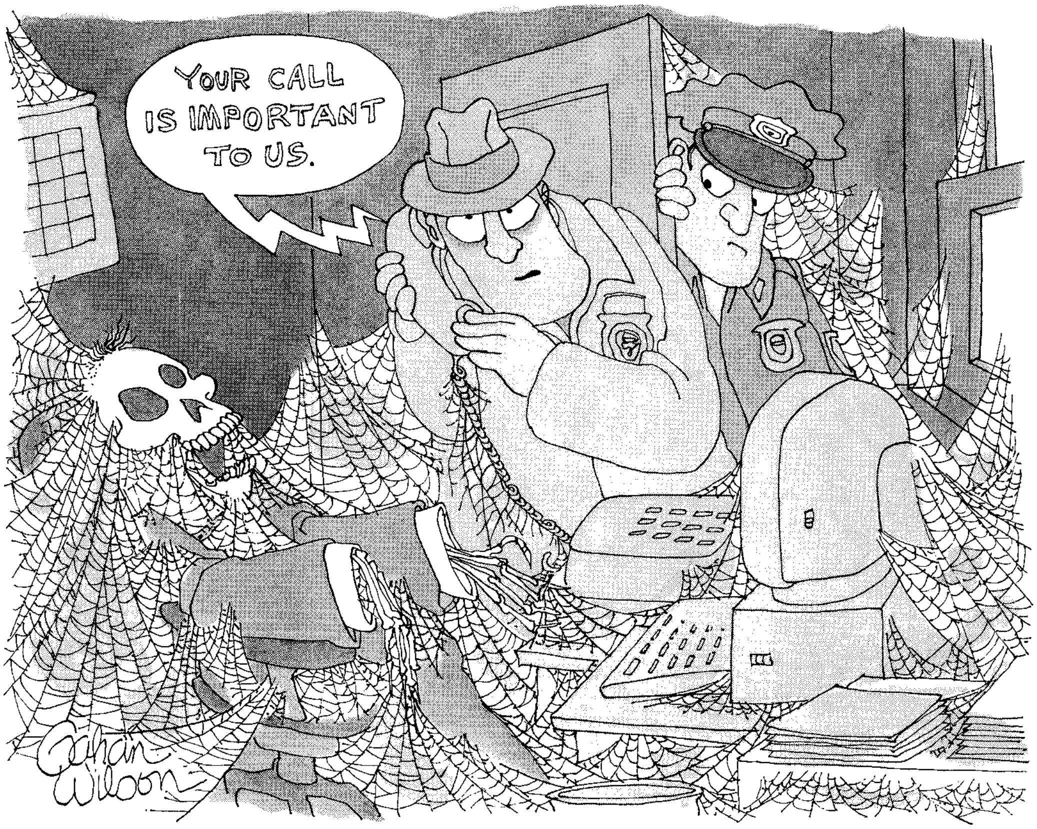
used to having boys
sister Karen said. “She grew up with a sister and had two girls of her own, and Arthur was a whole different creature for her. I think the problem does go all the way back to those years.”

To protect her own position of influence as Punch's wife, Carol had fought Arthur's appointment as publisher every step of the way. She scoffed when others suggested that he was the best-prepared member of his generation to take the job, and she denigrated the importance of any individual, including Arthur, who might hold the job. “If tomorrow there was a trained monkey at the head of the New York *Times*, that trained monkey would be the one invited to the White House,” she remarked. Carol considered her stepson a phony for taking public transportation everywhere and dining out in cheap ethnic restaurants, and she objected to the changes he was making at the paper. “So many people ask me, ‘Why are there so many stories about gays? Why do the stories seem slanted toward blacks?’ ” she said in 1995. When Punch made Arthur the publisher, it was in defiance of Carol, and she was not gracious in defeat. “Did you ever see the film ‘Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?’ ” a friend who knew Punch and Carol well inquired. “That's what it was like—rough, rough, rough. They fought like cats and dogs.”

Carol's receiving a diagnosis of colon cancer in 1993 didn't soften her antipathy for Arthur. During a visit to the London bureau, she stuck out her tongue at the photograph of him that hung on the wall next to photographs of other *Times* publishers. When Arthur called her hospital room one day to ask whether he and Gail could come over, his half sister, Cynthia, picked up the phone and relayed the message to her mother. “I told you, I don't want


YOUR CALL IS IMPORTANT TO US.
Gahan Wilson

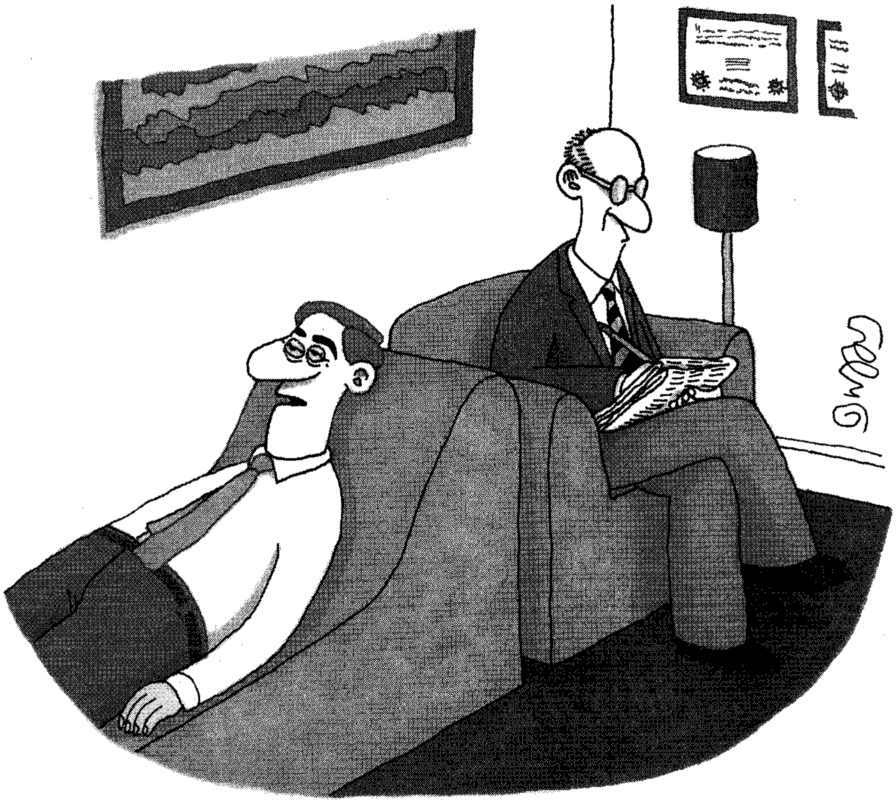
visitors!" Carol yelled loud enough for her stepson to hear.

Carol died in August of 1995. During her memorial service, at Temple Emanu-El, Arthur gave a eulogy to his stepmother. Without glossing over her brutal candor, he expressed admiration for her "grit" and the immutability of her beliefs. "Carol was like a Martini," Arthur said. "The first sip is a bit of a shock, but by the second and third you feel quite comfortable. And by the end of the first Martini you want another." When Punch's daughters returned to the family pew after their speeches, Punch reached out and touched their hands. When Arthur came back to his seat, he kissed him.

In the next few months, Arthur and his father gradually became more intimate. "We just started talking one day, and found that we liked each other more than we had known," Punch recalled. They began having regular lunches together and meetings. When, in 1996, Punch got remarried, to Allison Cowles, the sixty-one-year-old widow of the newspaper publisher William H. Cowles III, Arthur served as best man.

By the mid-nineties, Punch had made up his mind to transfer ultimate authority at the Times Company to his son. The problem was how to do so in a way that the family would regard as fair and Wall Street and the company's board of directors would perceive as responsible. Over two private dinners with his father, Arthur suggested that he remain publisher of the newspaper and take on the title of chairman. On October 16, 1997, the day that color photographs made their first appearance on the front page of the *Times*, the board of directors elected Arthur chairman of the company; Russ Lewis, the company president, was named C.E.O., reporting to the chairman; and Arthur's cousin Michael Golden was promoted to vice-chairman and senior vice-president—a move that satisfied the family's concerns about fairness. Punch himself assumed the title of chairman emeritus.

No succession at the *Times* arouses more speculation than that of the paper's next executive editor, whose job is to direct the news operation. Even though the incumbent, Joe Lelyveld, is still three years away from the mandatory retirement age of sixty-five, there is considerable talk about who will come after him. The two men whose names are most frequently mentioned for the job—Howell Raines and Bill Keller—are radically different in background and style.



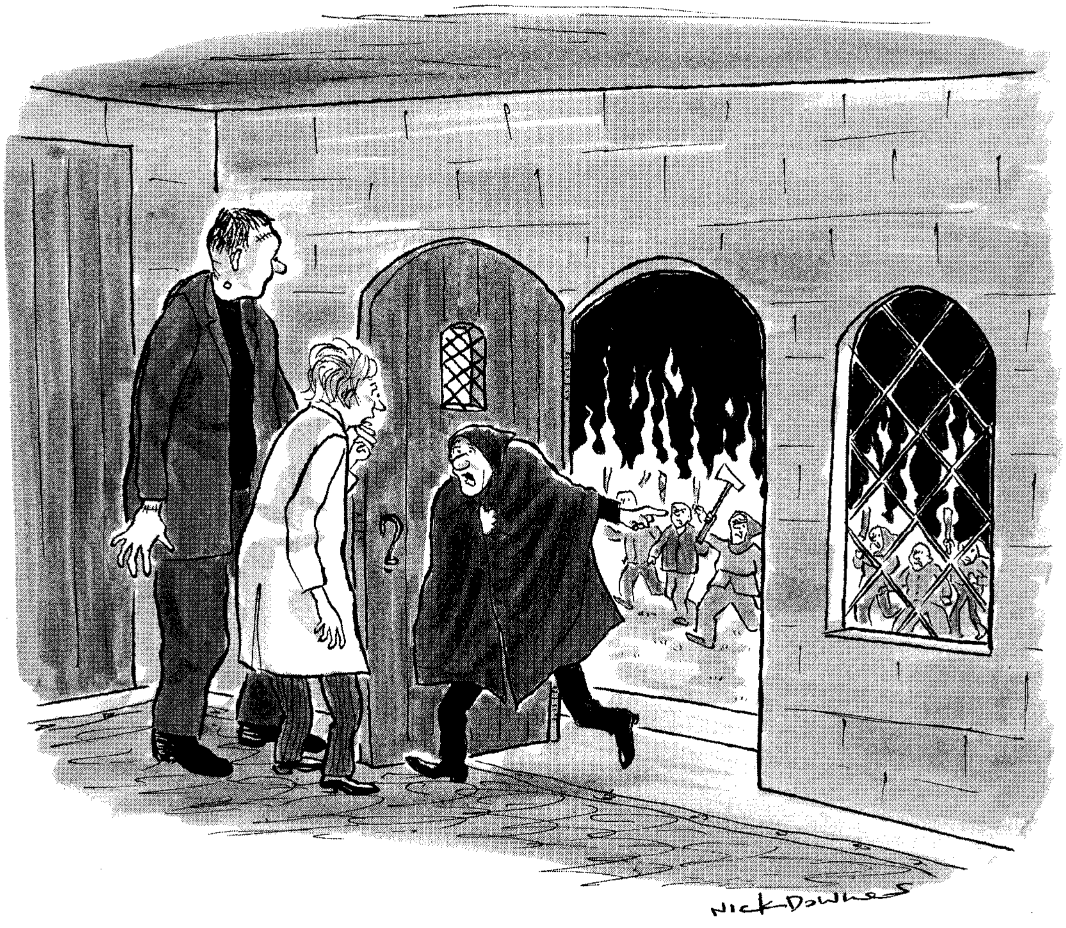
"I really don't see how giving you a six-letter word for a sixteenth-century crested metal helmet helps my problem."

Raines, who is fifty-six and has been the editorial-page editor since 1993, is a classic Southern liberal. At Birmingham-Southern College, an all-white institution, he took a degree in English in 1964. A year earlier, four young black girls were killed in a bombing by white supremacists in a church not far from the campus. More than thirty years later, Raines still regrets that he didn't join in the protests over the killings. "I was afraid," he said. "I lived through this great confrontation and didn't participate fully, because I wasn't brave enough."

Raines covered politics for the Atlanta *Constitution* and the St. Petersburg *Times* before he was hired, in 1978, as a reporter in the New York *Times*' Atlanta bureau. In 1981, he became the paper's White House correspondent, and after a stint in London he was appointed head of the Washington bureau. Raines, who won a Pulitzer Prize in 1992 for a *Times Magazine* article about his childhood friendship with his family's black housekeeper, sees himself as a man who has risen on his talents. In Washington, he earned a reputation as a demanding taskmaster, who created resentment by lavishing attention on a small lineup of stars.

A rugged-looking man who can strike people as intimidating, Raines is one of Arthur's closest advisers. An important reason that he agreed to take on the editorial page is that Arthur promised to invest the job with more power and visibility than it had had before. Arthur's vision of how he wanted to run the *Times* was by creating a Brain Trust, consisting of him, as publisher, and the executive editor, the general manager, and the editorial-page editor, with whom he would consult regularly. What the two men have most in common are their liberal beliefs and their essentially contrarian natures.

Keller grew up in San Mateo, California, as a son of the chairman and chief executive officer of Chevron. After graduating from Pomona College,



"It's the co-op board!"

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he wrote for the Portland *Oregonian* and the *Congressional Quarterly*, and worked in the Washington bureau of the Dallas *Times-Herald* before joining the *Times*, in 1984, as a Pentagon correspondent. In 1986, the paper assigned him to Moscow, and there he won a Pulitzer Prize for chronicling the Soviet collapse. His most recent posts had been held by Lelyveld himself: those of foreign editor and of bureau chief in South Africa.

When Lelyveld tapped Keller to be his managing editor, in 1997, he caused resentment by promoting him over the paper's six assistant managing editors. At the time, Keller was ending a fifteen-year marriage, after becoming involved with a journalist, Emma Gilbey, who was pregnant with his child. In the old, more straitlaced days at the *Times*, such an incident would have probably damaged one's chances of advancement, and many of Keller's colleagues thought that Lelyveld, who is quiet and introverted, would take a dim view of the tangle. Keller, however, maintains that Lelyveld was "a good supporter and friend during that period." Last April, when Keller married Gilbey, Lelyveld was his best man. At the reception, some were shocked to hear Keller address the rivalry between him and Raines, who was present. "Joe's a hard act to follow," Keller told the crowd, in response to a toast that Lelyveld had just given. Then, after waiting a beat, he said, "But let's not talk about succession."

Politically, Keller, who is both intensely competitive and irreverent, considers himself "left-leaning." He says, however, that growing up with a father whom he regards as both an accomplished corporate executive and a man of conscience has made him "less knee-jerk about my view of business."

Lelyveld is widely thought to favor his deputy, but he maintains that he has not indicated any preference to the publisher, or to anyone else. In 1994, when Lelyveld was casting about for his first managing editor, he sounded out Raines. A year later, Lelyveld told us, "Howell's not a great deputy type. I didn't want to get into a situation where I was going to become the managing editor of my managing editor."

Next month, at Arthur's urging, Raines will spend several weeks taking an executive-management course at Dartmouth. When Lelyveld heard about that sabbatical, he sought—and got—assurances from Arthur that this did not indicate that a decision about the succession had been reached. The development has added a frisson of tension to relations between the executive editor and the editor of the editorial page. "We're a little like barons in a Shakespeare play," Lelyveld said. "We're careful around each other."

Arthur maintains that he isn't close to picking either man. "My father taught me never to make a decision before its time," he said. "And, as far as I know, Joe plans to be here for a long time to come." Even so, the smart money is on Raines, because, as a member of the publisher's inner circle, he is aware of the issues that Arthur cares about. Keller, on the other hand, is still getting to know Arthur. "I can count on the fingers of two hands the number of times we've spoken alone," Keller said. "We're still kind of taking the measure of each other." In the newsroom, there is apocalyptic talk that a Raines regime will result in a "purge" and a "bloodbath" for all but a few stars. Raines maintains that he has learned to be a more patient, gentle, and inclusive manager, and he says he appreciates the need for both traditional reporters and literary stylists. "The six most talented people [in the newsroom] can't put out a newspaper," he says. "But the New York *Times* also needs

the marquee value of stars to prevail."

If Arthur does, in fact, decide on Raines, he could preserve the option to appoint the younger Keller after Raines retires. The question is how Keller will react if he loses out this time around. Theoretically, he could switch places with Raines and become editor of the editorial page, but colleagues say that that job doesn't interest him. When he was the foreign editor, he often joked that he had started up a *Times* bureau in one of his favorite cities, Istanbul, so that he would have a place to escape to should the occasion arise. "If it comes to it," he says, "I could imagine being a reporter again."

For Arthur, a more critical issue for the future is what the Times Company should do about the medium that Bill Gates has said marks the beginning of the end of newspapers as we know them. Arthur now spends roughly half his time on issues having to do with the Internet. "We are in a business that is being transformed by a communications revolution that is altering our basic sense of time and space," he told his employees earlier this year, in his annual State of the Times speech. "I suspect we will look back at what we [have] accomplished [in the past] . . . and remember it as being easy."

Like every other major newspaper in the country, the *Times* has a Web site, as do most of its magazines and broadcast properties. But that may not be enough to keep the *Times* competitive in today's rapidly transforming markets. Nearly every day, media conglomerates are forging electronic partnerships and spinning off Internet companies. The New York Times Company is not A.T.&T. or Disney; it doesn't have the resources to become an on-line leviathan, as its recent, comparatively timid, seven-and-a-half-per-cent investment in the financial-information site TheStreet.com attests. Moreover, the company's flagship entity, the *Times* newspaper, is what is called, in the withering jargon of Wall Street, a "mature" product—meaning that improvement and expansion will likely occur on the margins, if at all.

Last April, with Arthur's concurrence, the C.E.O., Russ Lewis, asked several of his senior executives to develop a plan to consolidate the company's electronic operations into a separate corporate entity. The idea was to sell a portion of the new company's shares to the public in order to generate cash to buy interests in other Internet enterprises or to acquire the software and personnel needed to establish the Times Company as an Internet player. In the argot of the Net, the Times wanted to create "Internet currency."

Some executives at the paper worried that Lewis was rushing a decision that had the potential to put the new digital enterprise, rather than the *Times* itself, at the center of the company. "There might be something out there called the New York *Times*, and it might be very profitable," Lelyveld said, "but, at least notionally, the newsroom could be in a very weak position."

In early May, all the participants gathered at the Times Building to discuss how to proceed. When Goldman, Sachs, the company's investment bankers, pronounced the spinoff not yet ready to be brought to market, the editors were relieved but not mollified. "What if the bankers had gone the other way?" they asked themselves. "What then?" One editor said, "The whole experience left everybody feeling a little queasy."

A few weeks later, the company merged all its Internet properties into a single division, called Times Company Digital—a tentative step in the direction of a spinoff. Last week, the company's vision of its electronic future became clearer when it agreed to acquire Abuzz Technologies, a specialty software company. According to Arthur, Abuzz software will allow the *Times* to connect its high-demographic users to one another with a heightened level of communications.

But how, precisely, the traditional values and standards of the *Times* are to be maintained in the anarchic world of the Internet remains an open question that lies, ultimately, in Arthur's hands. "My interest, finally, is that we do nothing to dilute the journalism of the New York *Times*," Lelyveld says. "We all depend on Arthur to interpret the different sides around the table."

Already, journalists at the paper complain of feeling like second-class citizens. Several of them grumble that Arthur's State of the Times speech overemphasized the Internet. "The folks at the newspaper were saying, 'What are we? Chopped liver? It's all digital, digital, digital,' " one editor said. In the newsroom, editors and reporters are already expressing anxiety over whether they will get a fair share of the Internet bounty.

Publicly, Arthur predicts that getting more involved with the Internet is going to be a "wet kiss" for the *Times*, because it stands to make the paper and the company's other news products instantaneously global. Privately, however, he has had his share of misgivings. Last February, when he came home from a digital-strategy seminar, in Tarrytown, New York, where the spinoff idea first took shape, his wife, Gail, asked him how it went. "Great," he said sarcastically, "if you don't mind the message that you can either cannibalize your company or let someone else do it for you."

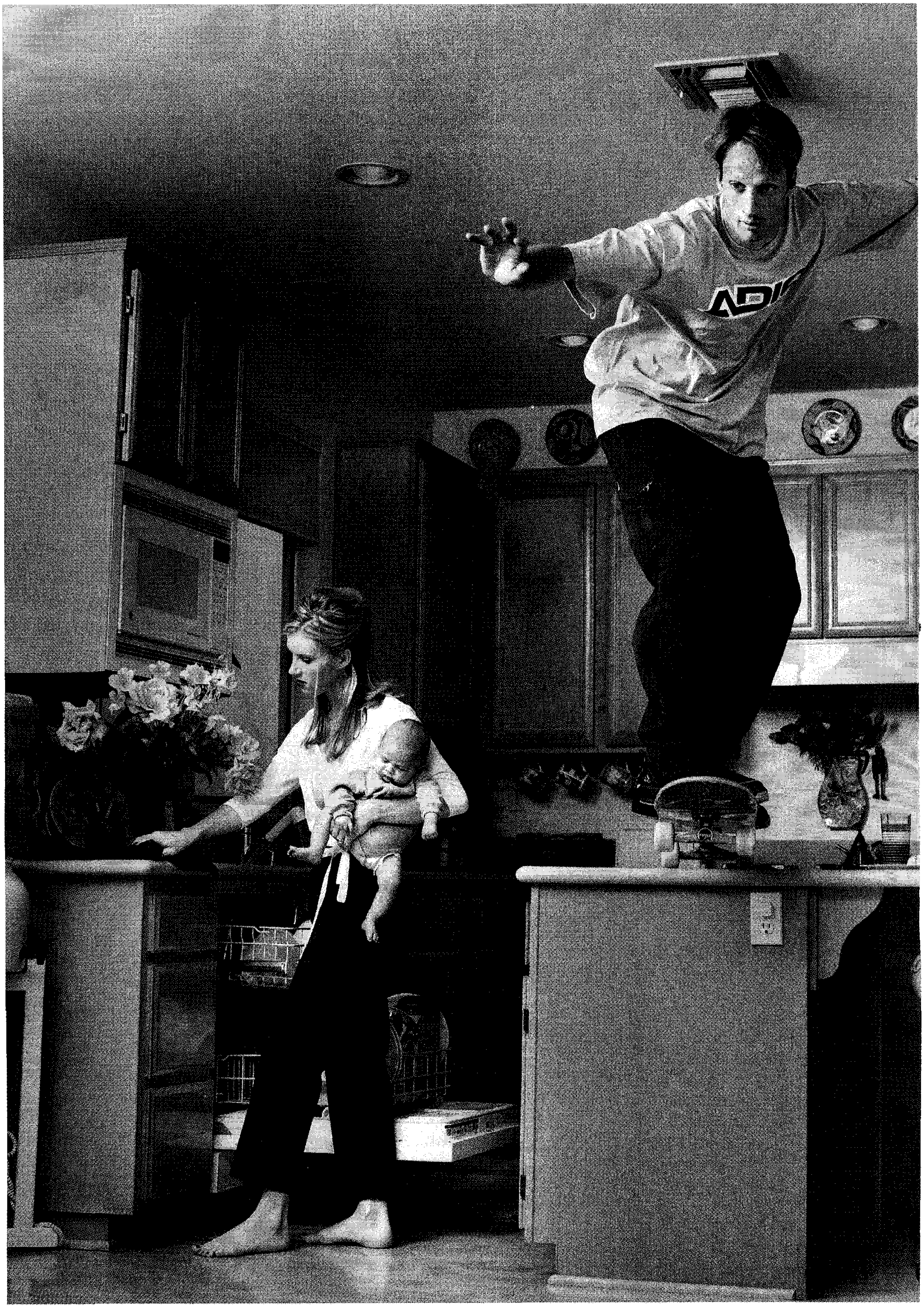
TWENTY-ONE months after Arthur became chairman, the burden of his responsibilities has begun to show. "His natural lightheartedness is on hold for a while," Gail says. "I look forward to the time when it will come back."

Occasionally, the playful wise guy still surfaces. Last October, Arthur arrived at a Halloween party dressed as Senator Putzhead—a reference to the Republican Senator Alfonse D'Amato, who had been ridiculed for using the word to describe a political rival. Arthur's hastily assembled costume consisted of white tie and tails, and a Groucho mask with outsized glasses, bushy eyebrows, and a large penis nose—a mask that he had admired for years on his cousin Dan Cohen and borrowed for the occasion. (A few weeks after the party, Arthur decided that Cohen should step down from his job as senior vice-president of advertising at the *Times*. Removing him was, he said, the most difficult personal experience of his career, but his cousin has rebounded by starting a production company for TV and Internet programming based on *Times* material, and the two men maintain that their friendship is stronger than ever.)

When Arthur was the heir apparent, he showed his anxiety mainly by grinding his teeth at night. These days, his hair has a touch of gray, and in order to have his favorite Belvedere Vodka Martini at night (straight up, with olives, and heavy on the vermouth), he has substituted oatmeal with brown sugar and raisins for his morning corn muffin. Recently, Gail has detected new symptoms of stress: the only time she sees his shoulders in their normal position is when they get into their Lexus and head for their country house in New Paltz. "He knows how fragile it is, he knows how remarkable it is," she says, referring to the paper. "It's daunting. I don't think anyone quite appreciates how hard it is."

Arthur likes to joke that he and other members of his generation in the family grew up with tape recorders under their pillows chanting, "You are one with the paper. You are one with the *Times*." On a credenza behind his office chair is a three-sided handmade nameplate, created for him last year at a company budget meeting. On one side is inscribed "Publisher." The second side has "Chairman" on it. And on the third side—the one that is visible to visitors—are the words "Defender of the Faith." ◆

"I wish you'd stop trying to gross everybody out."



SABA

THE SPORTING SCENE

THE BIRDMAN

Tony Hawk—part Michael Jordan, part Evel Knievel—is the star of a multimillion-dollar industry that still can't shake its outlaw image.

BY MARK LEVINE

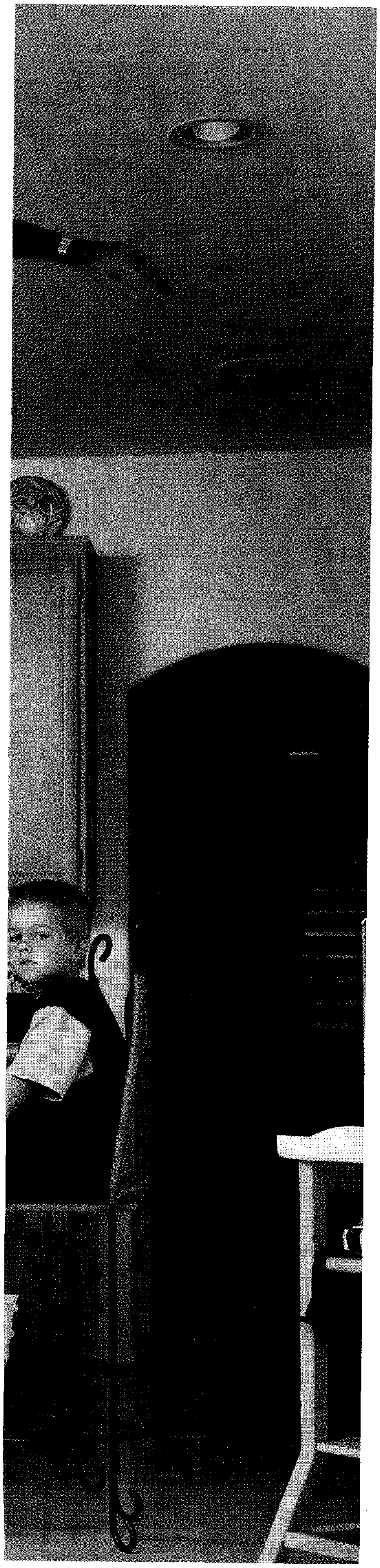
CARLSBAD, CALIFORNIA, which is situated along a hundred-and-twenty-mile strip of sand between San Diego and Los Angeles, is a town where the impulse to stay upright on a fast-moving piece of wood has spawned two closely related but rivalrous tribes—the surfers and the skateboarders. Skateboard lore concedes that the sport was more or less invented in the early sixties by barefoot "street surfers," who took to the pavement on days when the waves were flat. Over the years, however, the surfers and the skaters have grown apart, like cousins who secretly despise each other. The rift was to be expected. In Carlsbad, the surfers, who can be seen, day and night, strolling through town in wetsuits with their boards slung under their arms, are regarded as heroes. The skateboarders are viewed as something of a public menace. Like countless American municipalities, Carlsbad has banned the sport from many of its public byways: grinding a downtown curb with your board puts you in danger of getting slapped with a fifty-dollar ticket.

Still, Carlsbad recognizes that the local appetite for skateboarding can be contained, if not eliminated, and recently the town opened a small public skate park. One evening this spring, I went to check it out with a Carlsbad resident, Tony Hawk—a.k.a. the Birdman—who is widely acknowledged to be skateboarding's grand master. Hawk, who at thirty-one is a venerable figure in a sport dominated by teen-agers, stands a gangly six feet three, and has a touch of gray in his sandy-blond hair. He was dressed as usual: in baggy corduroy shorts that came down past his knees, a pair of thick-soled, black skate shoes that looked appropriate for a character in an "Archie" comic, and an oversized sweatshirt bearing the logo of the skate-shoe company Adio. A garish column of pink and purple skin flecked with scabs ran down his right shin. As we pulled into a parking area, he pointed out laconically that the city had seen fit to locate the skate park on the grounds of the Carlsbad Safety Center, between the police station and the firehouse.

Even so, the skate park, which was about the size of a baseball diamond, seemed designed to facilitate injuries. It consisted of three shallow concrete bowls, which were rimmed and linked by steeply sloping ramps and ledges, interrupted at various points by cement obstacles. We watched as one of several dozen skaters, a boy who had a shaved head and wore a black T-shirt that said "Products of Corruption," dipped into one of the bowls, tucked his torso into a crouch, and glided along the sloped perimeter in a birdlike posture. Suddenly, he popped out of the bowl and flipped his board; feet and board parted company, and he kicked the air frantically before coming back to earth, with a quick stutter-step. "Cool," Hawk said.

Hawk put on bulky elbow pads, knee pads, and a black helmet. Then he slapped his skateboard to the pavement, slanted his right foot across the board's front (or "nose"), kicked his back foot in the manner of an agitated mule, and glided into the skate park. Although he is the devoted father of two children and the client of five stockbrokers, the William Morris Agency, and a public-relations firm, he looked as single-minded as a child sprinting toward a carrousel.

At first, Hawk seemed scarcely more



PHOTOGRAPH BY MARTIN SCHOELLER

The Hawks at home: the skateboarder is a master of gravity-defying maneuvers.

adept at staying on his board than the others. When he tried to snap the board up a bank with his feet, he fell, and the board darted away from him. He got up, retrieved the board, skated along a ledge, and fell again, his impassive expression never changing. In this way, he blended seamlessly with the swarm of skaters, most of whom were half his age, and all of whom seemed immersed in the private rituals of flight and collapse. Skateboarding, I was beginning to realize, involves an almost masochistic willingness to fall, again and again, in pursuit of a perfect landing. It is also an intensely solitary activity. Despite the whine of urethane wheels on stone, and an occasional explosive curse, there was a prevailing hush in the park.

Finally, Hawk paused on a plateau in the center of the park. He careered down a ramp, scraped the tail of his board along the edge of one of the obstacles, bent his knees, went airborne, flicked the front of his board with a toe, turning the board into a perfect spiral, landed with his feet planted back on the board, and glided away. Then he signed autographs.

TWO CZECH SCHOLARS IN MUD TIME

I

Back to the United States. A battlefield,
some cannons, a wood, a creek near
Gettysburg named Plum Run. Early May.
We two sisters, Czech linguists on our way west,
are working to perfect our American English.
And two men this morning take us bird-watching.
We are watching for warblers; we have notebooks
in our blouse breast pockets for we have read
that Princeton's John McPhee carries a small pad
in this way so he can write while chasing
a bear. But today we will stand still with caught
breaths and try to see the improbable:
quick clots of color, so much small change
moving at the ends of the oak trees.

II

The Yellow-rumped—"Imagine," Anna says,
"this *rumped*"—the Palm, the Chestnut-sided
and the Black-throated Green: we studied these
last night in our book. Now we raise
binoculars to the black oaks' forking
branches, which seem far away as Prague.
Then a warbler-wave, some starts, some
fallings toward us, stitchings in the air:
they drop, give little kicks, and, streaky,
disappear. "What was *that*," says Anna,
and then, "That is, what *were* those?"
We hear a burry song. Then nothing.
They are gone. They leave us standing right
in red mud trying to pronounce their names.

I CALLED Michael Brooke, who is the author of "The Concrete Wave," a recently published scrapbook history of skateboarding, and he gave me an account of the sport's origins which might have come out of "The Hardy Boys." Skateboarding's roots, he said, "go back to the early nineteen-hundreds, when kids banged roller-skate wheels onto two-by-fours. Sometimes kids attached orange crates with handles to the two-by-fours, for steering. Sometimes kids broke the T-bar handles off scooters. This kind of thing continued through the Depression and the Second World War."

It wasn't until the early sixties that large-scale commercial production of skateboards began. Made by a firm in Los Angeles named Roller Derby and priced at a dollar ninety-nine, the boards were narrow slabs of wood with steel wheels bolted on. Boards with smoother-riding clay wheels soon followed, as did surfboard-shaped decks. As more people grew enamored with what Brooke called "the freedom of gliding," skateboarding became increasingly acrobatic, incorporating wheelies, spins, and headstands. In the sport's halcyon days, in the mid-sixties, fifty million skateboards were made. In 1965, *Life* ran a cover featuring a perky blond woman named Pat McGee doing a handstand on a skateboard; the headline read, "THE CRAZE AND MENACE OF SKATEBOARDS." Other warnings appeared, and, in short order, skateboarding was banned from the sidewalks and streets of twenty cities. Skateboarding's reputation as an antisocial sport was born.

There are now nine and a half million skateboarders in the United States. Ninety per cent of them are male, and nearly all of them are too young to hop off their boards to vote. They are not, however, too young to spend money: this year, skateboarders are expected to drop eight hundred and thirty-eight million dollars on boards and related paraphernalia. Municipal skate parks are proliferating, and at last count there were about three hundred of them in places as far apart as Boca Raton, Florida, and Ketchikan, Alaska. The sport has also become a media attraction as never before. In 1995, the cable channel ESPN introduced the Extreme Games—now known as the X Games—which spotlight skateboarders and other alternative athletes, and the event has been highly successful. This fall, NBC is planning to air its own Gravity Games.

Still, skateboarders cling to their outlaw past. Most of them are white and live in suburbs, but they tend to cultivate a taste for the baggy clothes and backward baseball caps, the music and the vocabulary, of hip-hop culture. Their rallying cry, which is repeated on T-shirts and bumper stickers, neatly combines a sense of persecution with bravado: "Skateboarding is not a crime." A recent letter to the editor in one of the leading skateboarding magazines, *Thrasher*, be-

III

The men are bagging, which means that later
they will place pencil marks in their bird books.
One in his youth shot guns at White-winged Doves.
These men stand tall, and seem a little formal.
They finger their binoculars, the morning's
corners widen: I think, *field glasses.*
Just then they tell us they will spare us
their joking. "No," I say, "we want to hear."
So, shyly, glancing, they note that when they see
a warbler they courteously inform each other
with the soft call "Small shit. Small shit."
Now the men seem marvellous, all tinged with danger—
silly like us, silly like the Yeats our father told us
we should only half remember.

IV

These men know warblers: the Mourning,
Bay-breasted, Worm-eating, Hooded. "These men
know shit," I say to Anna that night
in our room. "*Small* shit," she says with pride,
"small, smaller, smallest shit. Son of a gun."
Giddy, we turn stiff necks to each other,
pleased as twin singers on some crazy
talent show. I think on how bright forms
distract the upper air. We love these vivid
living men and we are learning
bird talk—a sweet, spiced, mixed talk
disordered as true poets' first and best sorrows,
free of clear pity, bent ambition.

—Deborah Larsen

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gins, "Yo, waz up, I'm 14 and been skateboarding for four years.... Georgia has nowhere to fucking skate." In *Thrasher* and its rival skateboard magazines, like *Big Brother*, which is published by Larry Flynt, the sport's most beloved heroes are the renegades who persist in doing their stuff outside the bureaucratically sanctioned skate parks. These are the so-called "street skaters," who infuriate landlords and security guards by riding their boards on whatever terrain is available—railings, steps, ledges, benches, hydrants, and loading docks—regardless of their safety or anyone else's. Today's leading street skaters, like Jamie Thomas, Chad Muska, and Eric Koston, are endowed with some of the street cachet of rap stars. On the other hand, as Kevin Imamura, the editor of *Warp*, a "skate snow style sound" magazine, told me, "The image of Tony Hawk is not so hard-core. But," he added admiringly, "that guy, his level of skating is so ridiculous."

In 1977, Alan Gelfand, a thirteen-year-old skateboarder, whose nickname was Ollie, spent hours in an abandoned, empty swimming pool in Hollywood, Florida, teaching himself how to pop his board into the air with his back foot, then stabilize it with his front foot and take himself airborne with the board seemingly stuck to his feet. This maneuver has been known ever since as the Ollie, and it has become an essential part of every serious skateboarder's repertoire—the equivalent of a plié for a ballet dancer. Whenever you see a skateboarder sail along the pavement, lower himself into a crouch, then jerk himself and his board suddenly upward, you are seeing an Ollie. It's the skateboarder's way of expressing his desire to fly.

Currently, the skaters with the greatest public visibility are the masters of the "half-pipe"—a steeply graded, U-shaped chute, into which the skater plunges, only to spring up, an instant later, on the opposite wall. Tony Hawk might be called the Baryshnikov of the half-pipe, a skater who combines speed, aerial elevation, and agility with fearlessness. Indeed, it's easy to forget that he is a skateboarder as he bounds above the rim of the half-pipe, twisting his almost horizontal body into a spiral, as if he were trying to disappear into thin air. Performers like Hawk display their aerial skills in contests devoted to vertical, or "vert," skateboarding. Vert competitions get prime coverage on ESPN, which has made stars of such half-pipe artists as Hawk and two of his neighbors in Southern California, Andy Macdonald and Bob Burnquist.

One afternoon, I went with Hawk to the place where he does most of his professional workouts—a thirty-two-thousand-square-foot skate park at a Y.M.C.A. in Encinitas, ten miles south of Carlsbad. I followed him up a flight of stairs to the deck of an eighty-foot-wide half-pipe. As a teen-ager, Hawk had pioneered the art of vert skating by learning how to Ollie off the ramp at the end of his upward ride, springing into the air with the board still clinging to his feet. On his runs at the Y, Hawk managed to sail six or eight feet above the top edge of the half-pipe; getting this "air" gave him time to perform stunts before descending to the ramp again. He also sometimes combines his aerials with "lip tricks," precisely timed maneuvers on the narrow edge, or "lip," of the ramp.

Hawk has been credited with inventing dozens of tricks. In recent years, the splashiest one he's come up with is called the Loop. It requires him to skate a loop-the-loop on a ramp that he compares to "a twisted Hot Wheels track." In another trick, the Kickflip McTwist, he flips his board with his feet while spinning his body five hundred and forty degrees. To pull it off, as he put it, "The stars have to align." He added, "I have dreams about skating all the time—anxiety dreams. Dreams in which I'm riding a board with a sawed-off tail, or in which the ramp is made of carpet. And dreams that I can't skate."

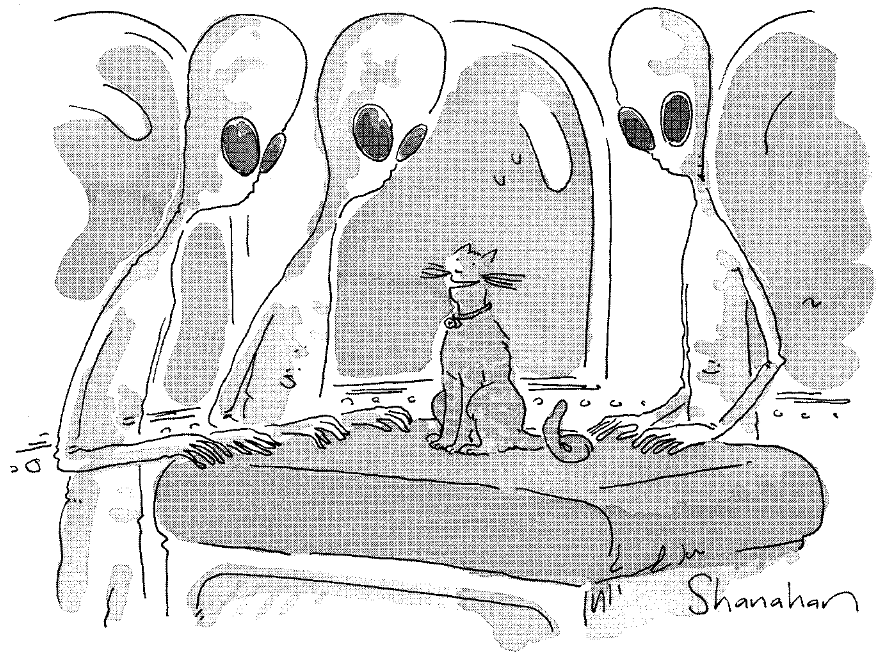
For Hawk, this was an unusually revealing statement; generally, he had difficulty talking about skateboarding in anything but the most technical terms. Unlike baseball, skateboarding was not to be analyzed; it was to be experienced. The moment Hawk's feet touched the board, he became a kind of genius of recklessness, propelling himself high into the air, stretching and twisting his frame into Brancusi-like postures.

HAWK was born in San Diego in 1968. When I asked him about his family history, he said that all he knew about his parents' origins was that they were both raised in Montana; he had no idea where his grandparents had come from, or what had brought them West in the first place. Hawk's father, Frank, who had been a Navy pilot during the Second World War, worked as a salesman. He and his wife, Nancy, raised their four children in comfortable suburban surroundings. Tony's older brother, Steve, was a dedicated wave rider who went on to become a longtime editor of the magazine *Surfer*. One day, Steve allowed Tony, who was then nine, to jump on his narrow fibreglass skateboard. I invited Hawk to relive the moment of his first skating experience. He paused. I waited. Finally, he said, "I don't know. It was fun."

Like many other skateboarders I met, Hawk told me that, as a child, he had been something of a misfit. When he was eleven, he committed an act of serious filial disloyalty by quitting his baseball team during his father's tenure as president of the local Little League. Around the same time, he also quit playing basketball. "I just liked being freer, not having to submit to some practice schedule of repetitive passing and shooting, not having to rely on all the other players in order to do well," he told me. "There's a lot of practice and repetition in skateboarding, but it's at your own pace. It's not someone telling you what to do. That was the bottom line. I just didn't want to be ordered around."

Hawk's mother had told me that Tony was "a very intense child, difficult and stubborn and hard to handle," and that his discovery of skateboarding had come at just the right time. "It's a wonderful means of containing all the hormones and rages that a kid goes through," she said. "We were just glad that, after a while, he took out his energy on the skateboard and not on us." Hawk doesn't challenge his mother's memory. "My brother and sisters had moved out by the time I was a kid, so it was like being an only child," he said. "I was impatient and uncoöperative. I'm sure it had something to do with my diet—soda, candy, ice cream all the time. I'd drink Cokes until I had a sugar buzz. If I were growing up now, teachers would probably say I had attention deficit disorder."

His passion for skateboarding, Hawk told me, made him an "outcast" in high school. "I just didn't relate to anyone," he said. "I never went to a single school function—sporting events, dances, prom. I just didn't care. I was going to school because I had to." Hawk dressed like a skater—in tight shorts when those were the fashion and, later, in neon-colored Jams. Like other skaters, he listened to the cutting-edge rock music of the time—bands like Devo and Depeche Mode, and punk groups like X, the Dead Kennedys, Circle Jerks, and Agent Orange. His boyhood hero was Evel Knievel: "Just seeing someone overcome danger and fear—he seemed like an immortal."



"Y'all look like dog people to me."

A 1983 photograph of Hawk in a skateboarding magazine shows a scrawny kid, looking closer to eleven than to fourteen, with one hand on hip, helmet on head, and shredded pads around an elbow, as he glares at the camera with a tense, glum expression. "I'd take the bus to the skate park after school every day, and my dad would pick me up at night," he recalled. "I'd skate for two or three hours, stop, hang out at the park, then skate again for another two or three hours. I was *living* at the skate park."

One afternoon in Encinitas, while I was watching Hawk practice, the Y.M.C.A. skate park was overtaken by a large group of teen-agers. Many of them were shirtless in the midday sun, and many displayed the scars of nasty skin-shaving falls. It was a school day, and I learned that they were students from the San Dieguito Academy, a nearby public high school that Hawk had attended for one unhappy year, in the ninth grade. Now, however, the school offers a skateboarding-for-credit class—one of the few in the country.

I stood on the deck of the half-pipe with Lani Madrid, a burly instructor. "We really had to fight the school board to start this program," he told me. "The authorities would rather have the kids reading 'Macbeth' than skating. They don't understand that this is a way of life, and that the kids are stoked on it. These kids definitely have discipline problems at school. A lot of them stay in school only to attend this program. They're great athletes, but they wouldn't excel at team sports. And they're tough. Look at how banged up they are. If they fall down, they don't cry for their mothers."

Several members of the class were girls. One of them, a freckle-faced, blond-haired eighteen-year-old named Ashleigh Mull, told me that she dreamed of becoming a professional in a sport in which the presence of females ("skate chicks") is rare. "Everybody looks on me as one of the guys," Mull said, and, as if to prove it, she told me that after recovering from surgery on a torn knee ligament she had broken a wrist and then, skating with a cast on, an ankle. "Yeah, it's a scary thing, the half-pipe—it's so big," she said. "But I love the feeling. It's adrenaline, it's a rush. Pulling the trick you've been trying for a month—there's nothing like it."

After the class broke up, Madrid told me, "We were all talking the other day, and the kids were saying, 'We don't want to be captain of the football team, we don't want to go to Yale, we don't want to live in a box house, we don't want to drive a Volvo. Just give us our skateboards.' "

"Stop calling! We'll get there when we get there!"

• •

THERE are about three hundred and fifty professional skateboarders in the United States, most of whom live in California. The vast majority of them make only a modest living—enough, say, to share an apartment with a couple of other skaters and to spend their days looking for appealing places to skate. Perhaps ten of them, like Hawk, earn six-figure incomes from endorsements.

"I never imagined any future for myself outside skateboarding," Hawk said when I visited him in a subdivision of Carlsbad where his Spanish-style house stands amid other, nearly identical stuccoed houses, each with a neatly trimmed lawn. A fifty-thousand-dollar emerald-green Lexus was parked in the driveway next to a Volvo station wagon. He shares the house with his wife, Erin, a former ice-skater, their son, Spencer, who was born this past March, and Hawk's six-year-old son, Riley, from a first marriage. Hawk has a spacious home office, whose walls are adorned with plaques and trophies celebrating his skateboarding triumphs, and with a large photographic portrait of his extended family, all of whom are wearing bluejeans and white T-shirts. An enormous gumball machine stands in a corner.

Hawk turned professional when he was fourteen. He was invited by Powell-Peralta Skateboards, the major manufacturer of boards at the time, to join the company's team of sponsored skaters. In the early eighties, skateboarding was not big business, and his financial success was gradual. He received free equipment and modest endorsement fees, and competed in weekend contests that might offer a hundred dollars as the top prize. Then, in 1982, Powell-Peralta introduced the Tony Hawk signature-model skateboard, which featured the ghoulish graphic of a bird's skull on its underside. By the late eighties, Hawk was collecting monthly royalty checks of approximately twenty thousand dollars.

A few years later, however, the skateboarding craze was over, partly because of the growing allure of rollerblading—an activity that skateboarders regard as contemptibly risk-free. Hawk found himself pleading with his first wife—a manicurist whom he'd met at a shopping mall in Fresno—for a Taco Bell and Ramen-noodle allowance. Skateboarding competitions were rarely held, and Hawk, who was not yet twenty-five, was skating toward forced retirement. Then, in the mid-nineties, a demographic bulge in the eight-to-eleven age group emerged. The doors of skate shops opened once again. At the same time, ESPN began giving prominent coverage to skateboarding events. Hawk took the top prize at the X Games in 1995 and in 1997.

Hawk, like most top skateboarders, is now a virtual billboard on wheels for his sponsoring firms, and his clothes and skate gear are plastered with logos. A top-selling signature shoe can net a skater a hefty annual income. Hawk's shoe of choice, as his T-shirts will remind you, is made by Adio. He is sponsored by 55DSL, a hip line of Diesel clothing, as well as by Swatch wristwatches, Arnette sunglasses, Fury skate trucks, and Club Med. He is also the co-owner of a skateboard company, Birdhouse, whose 1998 revenues were fifteen million dollars. He has been featured in a television commercial for the Gap, and his electronic likeness will soon be accessible via a video game devised by Activision called "Tony Hawk's Pro Skater." ESPN announcers routinely refer to him as "the Michael Jordan of skateboarding."

If there are some in the skateboard culture who feel that he has sold out, he doesn't care. "There are skaters who don't want anyone to penetrate their world," he told me. "But if my role is to be skateboarding's link to the mainstream, I'm willing to accept it. My business card for Birdhouse gives my title as 'Media Whore.' "

IN May, I travelled to Richmond, Virginia, where ESPN was mounting the X Trials, a made-for-cable-TV warmup for this summer's full-blown X Games. Hawk was appearing as a goodwill gesture, since the competition was moot for him; he had long ago qualified for inclusion in the games. The site of the trials was a defunct ironworks on the banks of the James River which had once provided the Confederate Army with cannons and ammunition. For the X Trials, the place had been spruced up with enough asphalt to cover half a football field, and over Mother's Day weekend it was bustling with activity. Several hundred young athletes—skateboarders, rollerbladers, and riders of those pesky small-wheeled stunt bicycles that can be seen jumping the curbs of major cities—had come for four days of competition. Live alternative rock music filled the air. Two paramedic vehicles stood at the ready. The X Trials charged no admission fee, and the event had drawn more than eighty thousand curiosity seekers, many of them teen-agers in packs, and families with small children.

"There's a bit of a revolution going on out there in sports," Chris Stiepock, the director of marketing and communications for the X Games, told me over lunch one afternoon in Richmond. "The X Games show a forty-year-old dad why his twelve-year-old son isn't picking up his baseball glove anymore." Stiepock went on to say that the rise of so-called "extreme sports" had everything to do with the growing disaffection from traditional team sports among teen-agers. He informed me that this year's X Games would feature such "disciplines" as "street luge," "freestyle motocross," and "big-air snowboarding." (This last event was to be performed on a ramp coated with shaved ice.) He also mentioned an event called "sky surfing," which would involve leaping from an airplane with a board strapped to the participant's feet.

What interested ESPN, Stiepock said, was the youth market's buying power. "The X Games is looking for Generation Y—twelve-to-twenty-four-year-old males," he told me. "They're nebulous and hard to reach, because nobody knows what to call them or what they are or what they're doing. All we know is that they're not doing traditional stuff anymore. But on any given telecast on ESPN of the X Games there are about fifty males ranging from twelve to twenty-four for every hundred households watching. That's higher than for any other sporting event on television. That's a direct hit. That's a household concentration that's very attractive to the Mountain Dews, the Taco Bells, the Marines, Snickers, Pringles, A. T. & T.—right down the line."

One of ESPN's ambassadors of extreme sports is Rick Thorne, a wiry twenty-nine-year-old bicycle stunt rider and the host of the cable channel ESPN 2's "X 2day," a monthly survey of athletic pursuits that you'll rarely find discussed in *Sports Illustrated.* I sat with Thorne on a knoll at the edge of the X Trials site, as he delivered a high-volume monologue. "I never consider myself an athlete, dude," he said. "I think of myself as an *artist.* Bike riding is like painting or sculpture or writing a song. There's a lot of freedom. There are no standards. I'm a rock star, and the instrument I play is the bike."

Thorne was wearing a black T-shirt with the word "Split" stencilled across the chest. His teeth glittered with gold caps, and a good proportion of his visible skin surface was covered with colorful tattoos. I asked him whether he felt that the pure bliss of extreme sports was in danger of being diluted by all the commercial attention that these sports were suddenly receiving.

"It trips me out that we're so accepted now," he said. "I liked it when we weren't accepted—when we were the bad boys. I liked when we'd go grind a curb and people would be like 'Get the fuck out of here.' Now they're like 'Are you on ESPN?' And it's weird, because I'm like 'Dude, chase me, call me a name, let me throw a bottle at you.' Those were the days, and they're never gonna come back. Damn!"

THE vert-skating competition was the big draw at the X Trials, and Hawk was going up against a field that included some of the world's top skateboarders—among them Andy Macdonald, who was the champion of last year's X Games, and Bucky Lasek, another Carlsbad-based skater. Each skater was allowed three forty-five-second runs in the final round, and he would be scored by judges on the difficulty of his tricks as well as on more subjective considerations such as fluidity and style. The highest score on a single run would determine the winner.

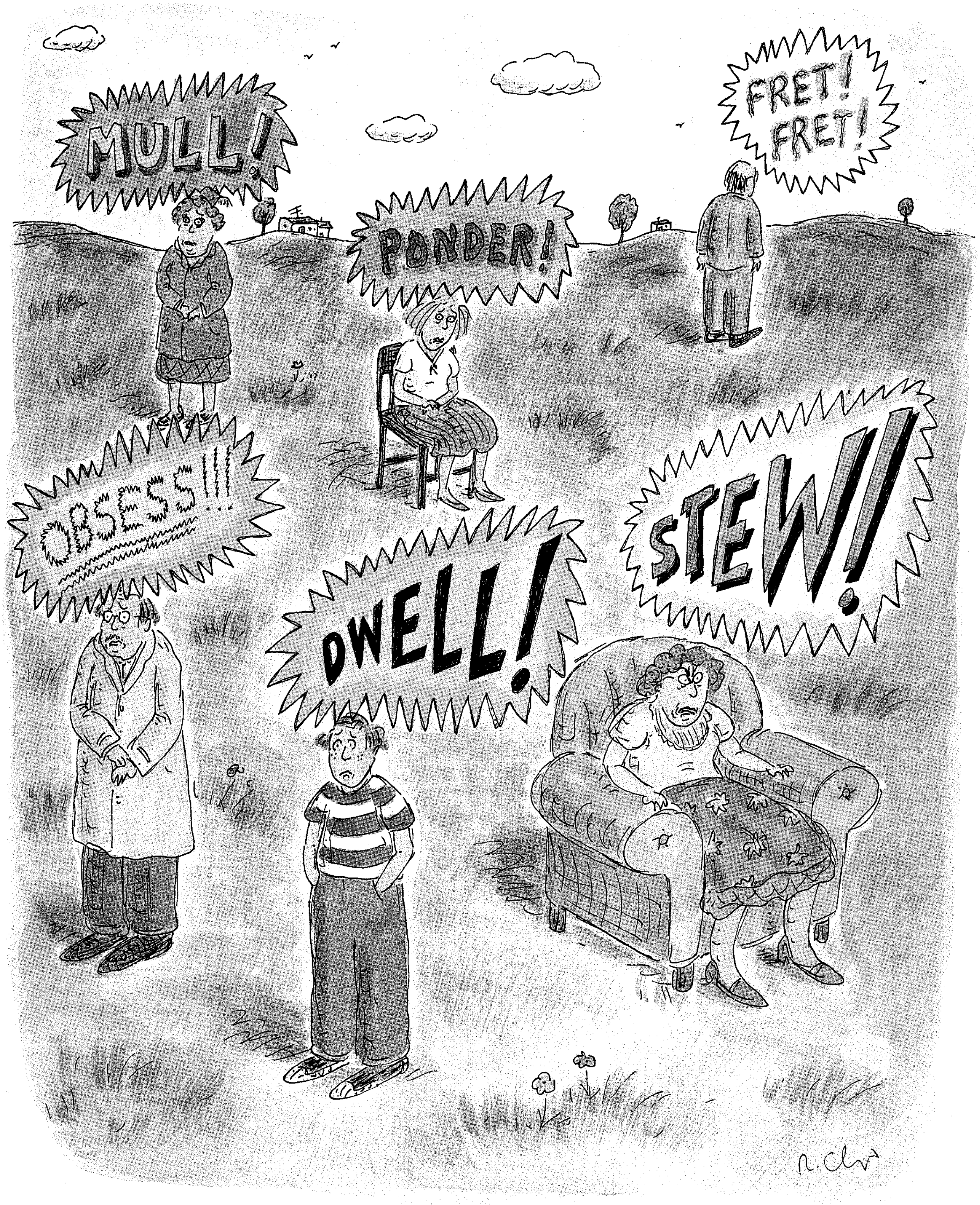
I sat behind the judges, who were all skaters themselves, and thought about how anomalous contests are in the world of skateboarding. The notion of being timed is at odds with the practices of real-world skaters, who will attempt a difficult move dozens of times, crashing on the ramp again and again, for the elation of nailing a trick once. Falling—or, as skaters say, "bailing"—is the skate-park norm, but contests tend to encourage fairly conservative skating because a time-wasting fall will cost a skater dearly. As a result, a skater's rank on the competitive circuit is far less important to him than his reputation in the skateboard culture—which is determined through word of mouth, magazine coverage, and videos. The skaters held in highest regard are those who are said to "take it to the next level." ESPN's extravaganza, I was beginning to suspect, was really a kind of dog show for the skateboard illiterates at large.

The first skater to make a run was Lasek, a rather perplexed-looking young man who had grown up in a blue-collar neighborhood in Baltimore. He sailed above the lip of the ramp, spun himself one and a half times in midair while clutching his board, and then rejoined it on the ramp, with perfect, ringing precision, like an opera singer hitting a high C. "Sick," one of the judges scrawled approvingly on his score pad.

Next up was Macdonald, who is called Andy Mac by fans. He is a skater's skater—an extraordinary technician, whose self-containment belies the speed and the ferocity of his effort. He strung together a dazzling series of tricks, twisting himself in compact midair spirals, switching his forward and backward feet from one descent to the next—an accomplishment similar to a baseball pitcher's delivering a fastball with his fielding hand. The rap on Andy Mac, though, is that he is a bloodless wonder in a sport that's all about passion; he is much admired but not much loved. One judge jotted down "robotic" while assigning Macdonald a high score.

Hawk's great appeal, I had noticed, was his vulnerability. Like Wayne Gretzky, he is not exactly one's image of a perfect physical specimen, and because his feet, which are size 13, seem barely to fit on his board, he always appears on the verge of losing his balance. ("The guys whose

NO-ACTION COMICS


MULL!
FRET! FRET!
PONDER!
OBSESS!!!
STEW!!
DWELL!
R. Chast

THROAT THRILLER
BOOTH

"Just for kicks, Leon, let's shut down the F.B.I. again."

styles are appreciated are the ones who look like they're almost out of control," he told me. "They look like they're on the edge the whole time, and then they bring it together.") When Hawk skates, his mouth hangs open in an awestruck expression, and his fingers are spread stiffly, like claws. Now he dropped onto the ramp, zoomed up the opposite wall, and got great air. He did a tuck-knee invert—a one-handed handstand from the lip of the ramp, his back bowed in an elegant crescent, his knees bent, his feet nearly touching his head, and his free arm thrusting the board toward the crowd—in which the dizzy speed of the skating was suddenly captured in a moment of emblematic stillness. And then, when he had seven seconds remaining in his run, his board slipped under him, and he slid to his knees. "Pretty sick," a judge noted in praise. "Still doin' it."

Lasek had a superb second run, but after that he seemed to have peaked, and on his final run he bailed. Andy Mac continued to nail his tricks, and his last run was a stunning assortment of aerials. From my vantage point, I could see that the scoring was very close.

Hawk took a modest bow before beginning his last run. Then he unleashed himself on the half-pipe. He hit a pair of 540s—airborne twirls of a turn and a half—and during one of them he rotated his board while his body was spinning, so that he looked like an organism with many moving parts. He followed with a 720 McHawk—a double-revolution spin that he was the first skater to land and that only a few other skaters have ever successfully performed. It happens so quickly that one is uncertain of what one has seen: the body is launched; the body floats to the crest of its arc; the body does its dervish; the body realigns with its wheeled instrument and skates back into real time. His execution was flawless.

Much of the crowd had dispersed by the time the winners were announced. Indeed, the skaters themselves seemed unconcerned about the outcome. Hawk accepted first prize—forty-five hundred dollars—as if it seemed O.K. Lasek stuffed his check, for third place, into one of the floppy pockets of his floppy shorts. Andy Mac left the contest as the runner-up, which happens to a lot of great skaters when they compete against the Birdman.

ONE summer day two years ago, at Point Loma High School, near the San Diego airport, one of the superstars of street skating, Jamie Thomas, performed what has become the most notorious stunt in the annals of skateboarding. First, he glided along an outdoor landing to the top of a double flight of concrete stairs—twenty-seven steps in all. Then he Ollied over the steel handrail, momentarily grabbed his board with one hand behind his legs, released his grip, extended his arms, and flew. In photographs of Thomas clearing the rail, he looks as if he were inhaling his own face. His body, compressed in the beginning of the jump, seems to open up as he approaches the concrete below. The board stays on his feet. When he lands, the board cracks in half, and he crumples and rolls over on the pavement. The stunt is known as the Leap of Faith.

Thomas grew up in small-town Alabama. "It was just a redneck haven, and skateboarding was not acceptable," he recalled. At seventeen, he dropped out of high school and made his way to San Francisco, where he supported himself by panhandling in the Embarcadero, waiting for his skateboarding prowess to attract the attention of sponsors. Now, at twenty-four, he owns a house on a quiet suburban street in Encinitas. I was invited to drop by one evening, after midnight. When I arrived, he was just finishing an interview with a reporter from *Thrasher*. He and I talked until dawn.

"I got off lucky," Thomas told me, discussing the Leap of Faith. "I just charley-horsed my ass, that was it." (The Leap of Faith gained greater renown last year, when an unknown skater from Texas attempted to duplicate the feat and fractured a shin with such force that the bone tore through his jeans.) "Everything I do is about fear and danger," he continued. "I scare myself every day."

Thomas has a shaved head, plenty of tattoos, and the sulky looks—part thug, part tortured soul—of the late Kurt Cobain. As I listened to him, I began to worry about his life. I had seen him on the video "Misled Youth," released this spring by his skateboard company, Zero. "Misled Youth" is a masterpiece of the genre, a film with handmade production values which moves through thirty-five minutes of aggressive skating at warp speed, yet seems to luxuriate in the ugliness of concrete and steel. To see these guys streaking down handrails and over stairwells—and, in one instance, across the hood of a car—is to see skaters in search of something that is beyond their capacity to understand. If the young Jean-Luc Godard had made a skate video, "Misled Youth" would have been it.

Thomas stands on the other side of the skate-culture divide from Tony Hawk. He is darkness to Hawk's daylight. Hawk is a skateboarding classicist. His venue of choice—the half-pipe—is an artificial realm designed specifically for skating. Hawk puts himself to the test in a setting that can seem like a metaphor for the world at large, with its symmetries and asymmetries, its inclines and declines, its hollows and flats, and its precipices. Hawk's world, like that of an abstract sculptor, is one of struggle with ideal forms.

As a street skater, on the other hand, Thomas is the creature of a haphazard, denatured environment. He is one of the legion of skaters who still prowl the urban and suburban landscape for skateable terrain, motivated by the longtime skateboarding cry "Skate and destroy!" When I asked him where he liked to skate, he said, "I'm constantly on the lookout for a place where I can fight my battles. As soon as I get off the plane in a new city, I'm excited. I start noticing things. I even notice things as I'm landing, like barriers around the airplane. Mostly, I skate at colleges and apartment complexes, and I'm looking for anything aesthetically pleasing that I want to try something on." Aesthetically pleasing? "You know, like there's a big handrail and there's a palm tree there. Rails are kind of my thing."

The fact that the street skater's chosen stage places him constantly in confrontation with various authorities—Thomas has been arrested once, at a power plant in Phoenix, and can talk at length on the subject of security guards—only adds to the breed's mystique. So does the street skater's refusal to wear protective gear, like helmets. "Street skating is about image, and feeling a certain way when you do it," Thomas said. "You don't want to feel nerdy when you're doing it. And, anyway, what's going to protect me?"

Thomas has had his share of broken bones, like any serious skater, and in each of the last four years he estimates that he has also suffered two or three concussions. One of them, which is captured on the "Misled Youth" video, is particularly chilling: Thomas grinds a handrail, misses his landing, and smacks his head on the pavement; one arm rises stiffly in the air, then falls; he looks dead. "You can get in a zone when you skate," Thomas told me. "You feel physically perfect; you have no dizziness in your head; you're completely focussed. When you feel like you can't be stopped by anything, you're in the zone."

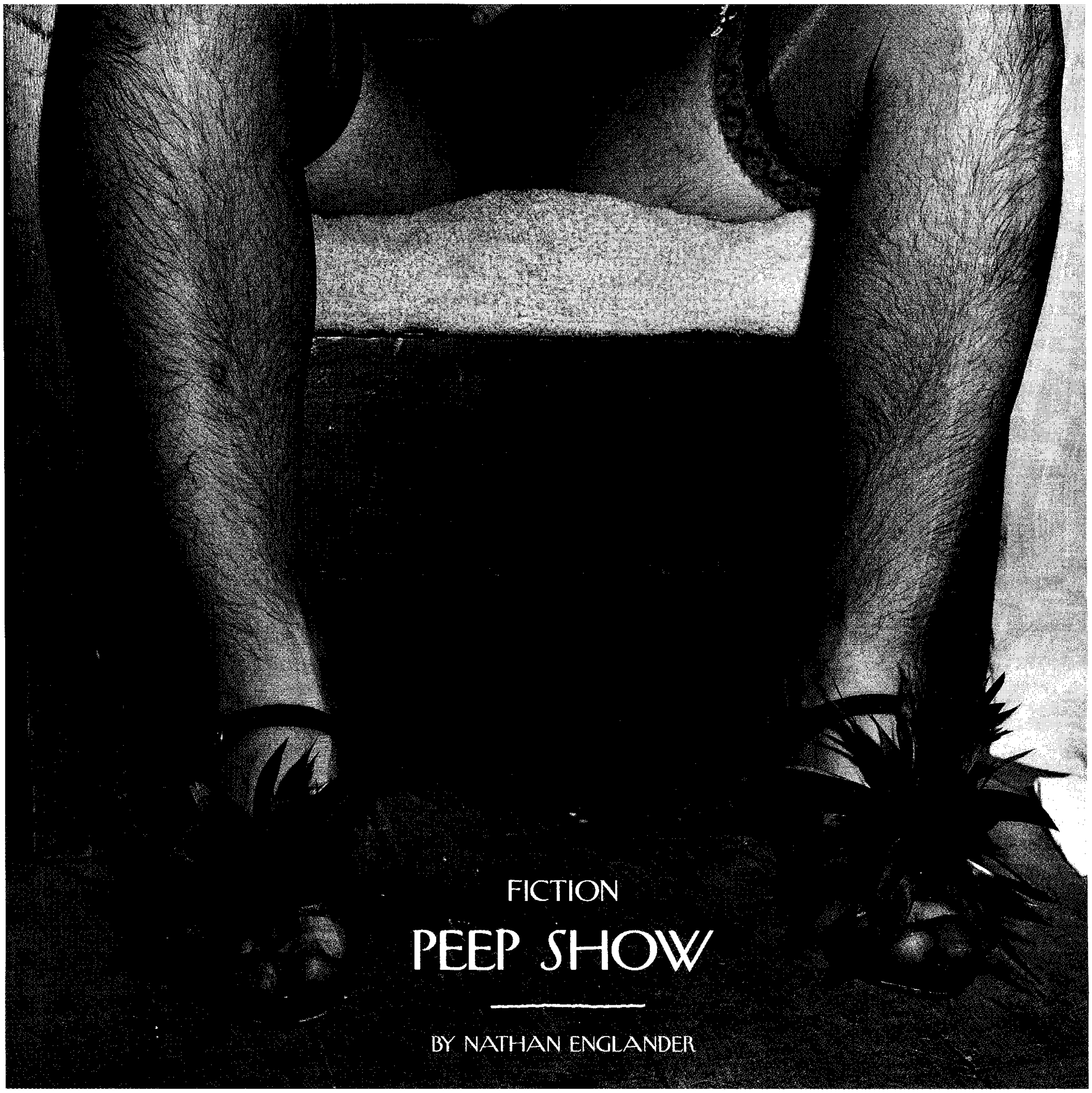
The X Games were held in San Francisco at the end of June and the beginning of July, and Hawk was again going up against Bucky Lasek, Andy Mac, and a corps of other top skaters. I tuned into the skateboarding competition on television, and I found the experience somewhat disheartening. Watching televised skateboarding is a little like looking at a postcard of a great painting. The sense of scale disappears, and the textures and tones of the experience are flattened out. When I stood on the deck of the ramp of the half-pipe in Encinitas, or sat in the scorching bleachers in Richmond, my sense of Hawk's fallibility—his precarious foothold on his slab of wood—had been very immediate, and that was what made him seem so human and so heroic to me. On television, he and his peers looked like mere technicians, succeeding or failing at their assigned tasks. It felt like sports, not like skateboarding. Hawk skated proficiently, but this time he was bested on the judges' scorecards by Lasek, who took gold, and Andy Mac, who placed second.

Nonetheless, before the X Games were over, Hawk managed to upstage not only the other skaters but his own previous achievements. During a segment of the games devoted to "Best Trick," Hawk decided to chase after what is often referred to as the Holy Grail of skateboarding: a two-and-a-half-revolution midair spin, called the 900. He made one attempt after another, and with each try he seemed to move a bit closer to landing the trick. On his eleventh try, he sailed above the top of the half-pipe twice to gain speed. Then, during his third time in the air, he spun his body two and a half turns counterclockwise, while grabbing the board with his right hand and bending his left arm above his head. His body was nearly parallel to the ground, and it was a beautiful sight—deliriously ephemeral. When he hit the ramp, he looked as though he might tumble again, but he kept his footing, regained his balance, and stood upright. His mouth hung open, astonished. He drifted on his board across the half-pipe in a diagonal line, looking lost. Skaters mobbed the ramp. Andy Mac, Lasek, Bob Burnquist, and other competitors slid down the half-pipe from the deck and hoisted Hawk on their shoulders. Hawk staggered off to find his wife and baby. ESPN announcers quickly declared Hawk's feat to be a historic moment in alternative sports. "This is the best day of my life," Hawk said, after returning to earth.

On my last day in Carlsbad, Hawk presented me with my first skateboard. It was a longboard—about a foot longer than a standard skateboard, and with larger, softer wheels, which are intended to give a smoother ride. It's hard to do tricks on a longboard, Hawk told me, adding that it takes a few months of daily practice to accomplish even "a teeny, tiny Ollie on it." Nonetheless, he said, it's "great for cruising."

My board is a very sleek model of Russian birch, covered with glittering grip tape on the top, and adorned with a tasteful black-and-red "G," which stands for Gravity, the name of the manufacturer. On the back end, it has a small kick tail. It tapers toward the rear, flares out subtly in the center, and has a front end carved into what looks like a mushroom cap. It's a beautiful piece.

That night, after dark, I went out into the parking lot of my Carlsbad motel. I placed my front foot on the board, kicked with my back foot, and got myself going. I bent my knees and spread my arms for balance. I went down a slight incline and knew that I couldn't stop. I jumped off, fell, and banged a knee. One knuckle was bleeding a little. I got back on the board. A shallow ditch that ran through the lot was surfaced with smoother cement. For the next thirty minutes, I skated back and forth in the ditch, undisturbed. The nearby San Diego Freeway hummed, muffling the Pacific surf beyond. The cement vibrated pleasantly. It was a new discovery of the paved world below. ♦



FICTION

PEEP SHOW

BY NATHAN ENGLANDER

Allen Fein is on his way to Port Authority when he stubs his toe and scuffs his shoe—puts a nick in a five-hundred-dollar investment. He pulls out a handkerchief and spit-shines his toe cap, cursing with every pass of the cloth.

The scuffing, the nick, has bumped Allen from the flow to which he is accustomed. And he looks around Forty-second Street at the gentrified theatres and the wholesome shops, the kind a family can enter in the bright light of day. Where are all the hucksters who used to stand outside promising Nirvana and shaken booty, forbidden acts and creamy thighs? So busy has Allen been with his own transformation that he's missed the one going on around him.

He blushes at the thought, wondering how little Ari Feinberg had ever become Allen Fein, Esq., in fancy oxblood wing tips. When had he become a grown man, on his way home to a loving wife, a pregnant wife, a beautiful blond Gentile wife, who laughed when he didn't know how to work the Christmas lights, who bought a candle with a picture of Jesus on it when it came time for the memorial for his father? ("They were out of the little white ones," Claire had said. "Can't you just turn Jesus toward the wall?")

Allen straightens his tie and picks up his briefcase. He takes another look around and asks himself: As polished, as straight, as on the up-and-up as Forty-second Street now appears, is it still the same inside?

And then the man says it.

"Buddy," he says. "Mac," he says. "Upstairs. Girls. Live girls inside."

"What?" Allen says, catching the sign in the window: a giant neon token with "25¢" flashing in its center.

“That’s right, buddy,” the man says. “Twenty-five cents for a spherical miracle. New York’s only three-hundred-and-sixty-degree all-around stage. Just follow the stairs, you can’t get lost—all the arrows lead to one place.”

And Allen goes in, glancing only for a second to see if fate has mustered an officemate or neighbor to descry his ascent. He heads into a stairwell and makes his way to the second floor.

When he enters the hall, he faces a towering figure behind a podium. Behind this giant, the hallway opens into a large room containing a single, massive, pillarlike structure, with doors to individual booths spaced evenly all around.

Allen smiles at the man as if the two were in on a joke, as if his visit were an understandable bit of mischief, the kind of thing he could tell Claire about. Yes, if he feels guilty enough he’ll tell Claire he went inside. Allen fishes out a quarter and places it on top of the podium.

“A dollar,” the man says.

“It says a quarter.”

“It’s a dollar,” the man says. He does not return Allen’s smile.

Fumbling with his wallet, Allen pulls out a five-dollar bill and takes five tokens—too bashful to ask for change.

“Touch,” she says. She is looking right at him, she can see him. This is not how Allen Fein remembers past visits, not with the women staring back. There are four women seated on a carpeted platform, and all, eying him, make the same offer. “Touch,” they say. “Touch.” Well, three of the women say it. The fourth—sitting in a cheap plastic lawn chair, too wide for it, her thighs, cut in half, drooping, like her breasts, in languid arcs toward the floor—is reading a book. She’s got glasses on and is holding a page, ready to turn it, and Allen knows the motion will be slow and lazy, as weary as her posture.

They are all naked, or almost so. The second woman wears a bra, the third panties, and the fourth has the book and glasses. It is the first one who is, to Allen, beautiful.

He has not set foot in a peep show since boyhood, but he recalls almost everything from then. He remembers shivering so badly that his teeth chattered, his hands pressed between his legs for warmth. He’d been afraid that he might freeze to death, actually expire from excitement. And he’d often indulged this nightmare, squandered precious viewing time on the darker fantasy of dropping dead right there in the booth. Allen remembers the old setup. The sound of a token dropping and then the labored spin of gears. He remembers the strip of light at the bottom of the window frame as the wooden partition was drawn up into the wall. Behind thick glass—smudged and fingerprinted, always fogged with heavy breath—were the women. They danced as if they cared, moving to titillate the observer.

The individual booths are more or less the same. It’s the windows that are different. Allen is shocked to find that the glass is gone. The women just sit on their chairs, vivid, looking back.

The stage is circular and completely surrounded by the inner wall of the booths. Many of the partitions are raised, and Allen can see men in their compartments at all angles. One middle-aged, broad-headed voyeur is clearly masturbating with vigor. Allen catches the eye of a Latino man off to the side, wearing the very same tie he is. Allen puts a hand to his chest and feels the tie pulsing along with his heart. The Latino man, such a good-looking man, turns away from Allen and makes eye contact with the woman in the bra.

She stands up and walks over to the man and his hands come out through the window, penetrating the fantasy world. Allen has never seen it broached before—the world of dreams cracked open.

When the first girl looks at Allen he feels unworthy to watch. He can hardly bear having her acknowledge him. He wants to ask her what she is staring at. “Can I help you?” he would have said if they were anywhere else. The girl is perfection and Allen wants her desperately. It’s a feeling so pure that he wants to cry. How terribly unfair that his whole self aches because of the shape of a shoulder, the soft lines of a hip. Allen stares at the girl’s legs, a deep black against the whiteness of the chair, and then up at the trained beckoning in her face. There is the glow of real personality behind the staged.

“Touch,” she says. And Allen wants to touch her—to see if she is real. But he hasn’t yet responded, and the girl is moving toward him, long and graceful, the woman of his dreams.

Allen is shaking again, as he did when he was a boy. And why shouldn’t he be? A loyal husband, who, reaching out, touching, had always honored his vows. He does not move his hands or his fingers, just holds them against her wonderful skin, so warm, almost hot. The girl takes Allen’s hands in her own, presses them to her chest, and massages. It calms him. She does this like an expert, a masseuse, someone trained in an art. Allen hasn’t been so aroused in years. He wants to climb through the small window to be with this woman. But the partition starts to come down. His time has run out. In the split second that he has to make his choice, Allen takes back his hands.

Leaning up against the wall in a panic, Allen tells himself that the fondling of this woman was an aberration, just like his coming up those stairs.

He had only wanted a peep. He’d gone up the stairs a loyal husband and lover, a working man on his way home to the burbs. And now, minutes later, a different man emerges: a violator of girls and wives and matrimonial bonds. Allen considers leaving the booth, though his legs feel hollow and unsteady. And there is also his erection, diabolically hard, bringing to mind all the basest descriptions in pornographic magazines.

Allen is so close to climax that he is afraid to move. He wants to get away without having to face the enormity of his pleasure. He remains still, his hand clutched tightly around the tokens, and thinks of Claire waiting at the bus stop, the seatbelt stretched over the arc of her stomach, a chamomile tea steaming in her travel mug. But then there is the girl on the other side. So wonderful. Her legs and skin. The way, the skill with which, she touched. The idea of her is so enticing it pushes him past control. Allen lets go and lets the shame rush in and fill the emptiness, so that even his hollow legs feel solid and full.

Immediately there is plotting. Already the deceit grows. What to do with his boxer briefs? And to ride the bus to Parsippany this way, to face Claire, soiled. She could drop him at the gym. The gym before dinner, that is the plan. But his erection endures. Allen is neither so old that it should disappear in an instant nor so young that it should remain, and in such a pronounced and steadfast state.

Then again, he thinks, why should it fade when that angel of a girl is so near and there are four more tokens and he has already crossed the threshold and made his way inside? The erection builds strength and, Allen fears, may never go away. He cannot walk out in this state. And he admits to himself that if he didn't ever have to leave, if it meant irretrievably losing the outside world, he would sacrifice it all if only that siren would stand up from her chair, take his hands, and guide them over her body once more. But he won't allow himself such an indulgence. He will put in the token, but he will not touch. He will look at his shoes and the scuff mark that damned him. This is how he will occupy himself, without a whit more enjoyment. He will use up what he paid for, but the penance begins right now.

ALLEN drops the second token in the slot and, closing his eyes and hearing the partition rise, falls against the wall of the booth.

There is silence. He waits, counting in his head. A dollar doesn't buy much, and soon the window will close.

"Hey!"

He hears it, the voice deep, raspy, and, he thinks, rather accusatory. "Hey, you. Feinberg. You want to touch?" Allen knows who it is. But it takes some time, an understandable pause. "Touch, Feinberg? You want to cop a feel?"

He raises his eyes and goes cold. There, in the first chair, looking the same, though fifteen years older, is Rabbi Mann. He is naked and fat, his chest hairy. Mann has become so overweight that his masculine breasts are bigger than the girl's.

Down the row are three other rabbis from his old school. Rabbi Rifkin sits in the second chair wearing boxers, a bleached-out blue. Then there's Rabbi Wolf, wearing tzitzit, the once white fringes now yellow against the chair. In the last seat is Rabbi Zeitler, a tractate spread across his lap, his glasses black and thick-lensed, so that his eyes seem tiny and his head deeply notched. Zeitler adjusts his glasses, pushing them higher on his nose.

Amazed at himself for not passing out or losing, immediately, his mind, Allen wishes that his shrink, Dr. Springmire, were there to help him along. The rabbis' return is a lot for him to process. He has worked hard at breaking from their world and he doesn't remember ever wanting it back.

Rabbi Mann stamps a foot against the floor. "Down to business, Feinberg. Should I come over so you can lay a hand on me? Do you want me to come over by you?"

Allen grabs the window frame, scratches at the groove in the top, trying to drag the partition down. "Please, Rabbi. Sit. Do sit."

"Of me you don't want a pinch?" Mann puts on a falsetto. He holds up his arms and waves his fingers. He is trying to look dainty. "I'm not so good as the pretty girl with the long legs? Too hairy? Too Jewish to be touched by the big-shot lawyer? By Mr. Ari-Allen-Feinberg-Fein?"

"That's not it," Allen says. "Not at all. I wasn't going to touch her again. I was already done."

"Not true, Feinberg. I know better. Ari Feinberg isn't satisfied. He never is." Rabbi Mann addresses the other rabbis. "But does he ever stay to finish? No, he always turns to run."

A good idea, Allen thinks. He spins and makes a rush for the door.

"Hold it, Feinberg. Turn around. Look at me. Listen for a second."

Allen drops his hands, turns, looks, listens.

"Always so emotional," Rabbi Mann says, leaning forward so that his testicles hang off the edge of the chair. "Always acting without thinking and chasing around after your own heart." Rabbi Rifkin nods in agreement. Rifkin has always agreed. "Listen, Fein—I'll even call you by your new name. Turn on your lawyer's head, Fein, and try and follow some logic. Do you think if I'm here, if I've brought the other rabbis and we're sitting up here like at the shvitz bath, that you can so easily tiptoe out the door? Use a bit of *sachel*," Rabbi Mann taps at his head, "and deal!"

Always more. The rabbis have always wanted more from Fein than Fein gives. But is he not dealing spectacularly well? Is he screaming "This can't be happening!" No. He is listening with a fair amount of respect. After all, it's an invasion of privacy and a Halakic crime. Whatever the rabbis think, the tokens, the neon signs, the man in the street all promise live girls—which the rabbis are not. They are, in effect, stealing from him with every second they sit onstage.

The rabbis don't seem to mind. They sit and stare, and Allen stares back. He is waiting for his token to run out and the partition to lower.

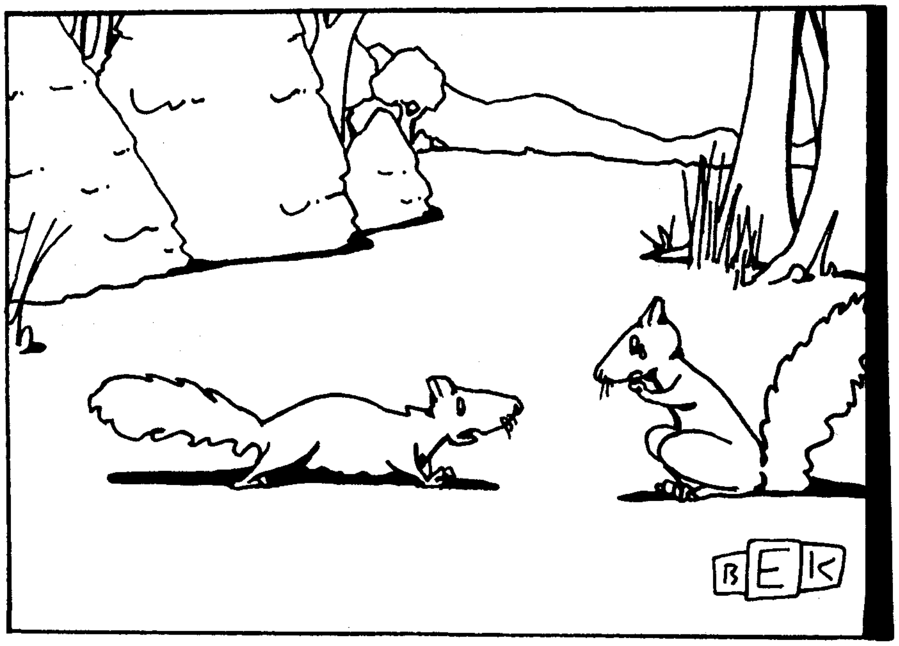
When it doesn't, Allen asks them a question. He tries to sound unflustered, but his voice is all schoolboy angst, the question a plea.

"Why," Allen says, "doesn't the partition come down?"

Mann is as aggravated as he was when trying to teach the boy Talmud fifteen years before. "That's the kind of idiocy I'm talking about. Do you think, Fein—do you really think that the window is supposed to close?"

"No," Allen says, his tone pitiful. "I don't think it's ever going to close."

"So frustrating!" Mann is shouting now. "You know it won't stay open forever as well as you know it won't close



"You should find solace in the fact that he left behind such a large body of nuts."

too soon. You've got a good head, Fein. So tell me why you're always acting like a dummy."

"You wonder why I don't talk to you? Listen to yourself, Rabbi. Always on the attack."

"What, I should hold you up as an example? Say that Fein made the right choice when he decided it was easier to live without God? Congratulate you on changing your name so that the *goyishe* restaurant man doesn't make you repeat your reservations? Fein who goes to live in a town where there are no troubles and no Jews, so his son will be able to play soccer carefree on Shabbos morning?"

"It's a boy?" Allen interrupts. "Claire's having a boy?"

"I don't know! Look at you, always worrying over the tiny details. What about the fact that it won't be a Jew?"

"I'm all right with that," Allen says.

This is when another partition, directly behind the row of rabbis, opens. Allen is not surprised to see Dr. Springmire, his psychologist, standing there, scratching at his short, secular beard. A witness. Mann has called a witness.

"First a token," the doctor says to his patient.

"A token?" Allen says.

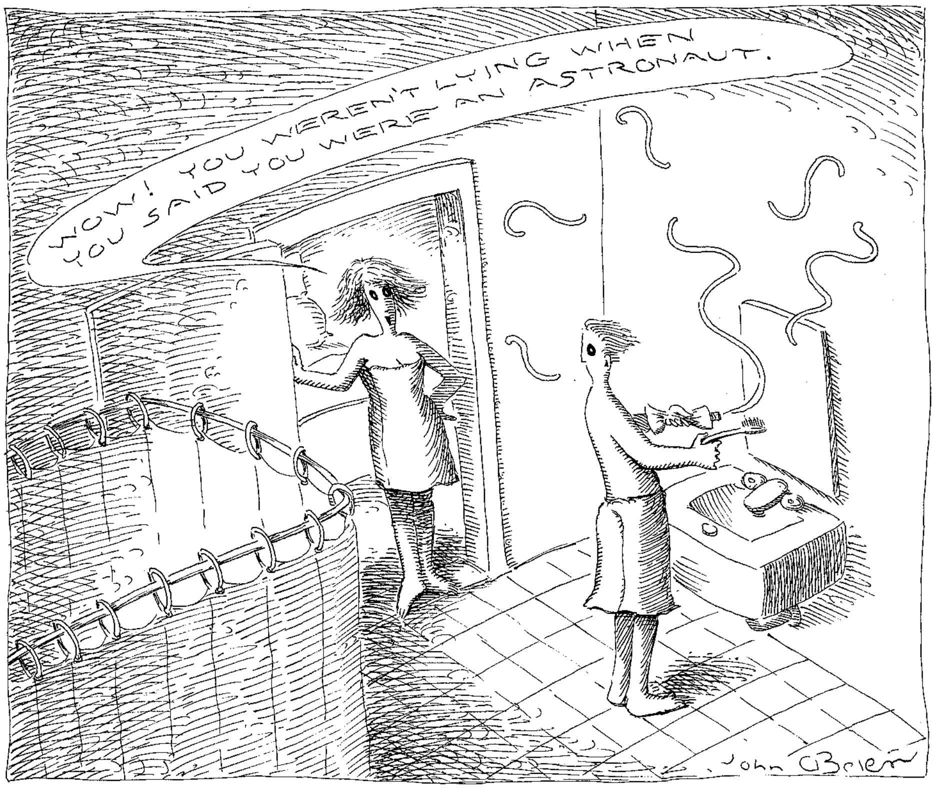
"I think it would be best if you paid for my peep. Thus far in your therapy we've constructed a relationship based partly on financial remuneration. We dare not put that trust in jeopardy, especially in a situation as peculiar as this." He offers an apologetic smile.

Mann rolls his eyes as Allen inserts a token on Springmire's behalf.

"Is Fein all right with his transformation, Mr. Doctor?"

"He will be," Springmire says. "He has come a long way, and one day he will, I'm convinced, adjust to the life he has made—it is a very nice life. He is a very nice man."

"Did I say he wasn't?" Rabbi Mann strains, twists in his chair to face the doctor behind him. "I'm here for that very reason. I want to know what makes a nice boy forget God. What makes a boy with a nice job and a nice life never question how he came to such comfort? What makes such a darling boy—with such a darling wife waiting for him at home—climb the stairs into a place like this to fondle a young girl who must sell her body to live?"


WOW! YOU WEREN'T LYING WHEN YOU SAID YOU WERE AN ASTRONAUT.
John O'Brien

It is Allen who answers. "It's you." He points a finger and reaches through the window.

Rabbi Zeitler looks up from his book and says, absent-mindedly, "Touch?"

"It's you who made me this way," Allen says. "I came here because of you." And with a fresh sense of injustice he recalls Mann's classroom, and the rabbi bringing a heavy fist down against his desk, condemning student after student for matters that surely could be settled only in the world to come.

"Really?" Mann says, a big smile on his face. "And all the time I thought it was the other way around."

"What choice was I left with, Rabbi? When I used to play at Benji Wernik's house, the grandson of the Galitzia Rebbe, he used to pull filthy magazines from the space behind his father's bookcase. This is where his father hid them. What am I to do if I learned the facts of life from Simcha Wernik's magazines?"

Dr. Springmire is raising a finger. "If I may interject, it is normal to masturbate. Healthy, even. Such pictures are of no importance if in the possession of an adult man."

"But the son of the Galitzia Rebbe. A wise man. A teacher of high-school science. What is a boy raised in a world of absolutes to do when he is faced with contradictions?" Allen turns his attention back to Mann. "You painted for us the most beautiful picture of Heaven, Rabbi, then left us to discover we'd all end up in Hell. Some room—maybe if you'd left us some room."

Rabbi Mann is fed up. He waves a fist, the loose flesh of his upper arm shaking obscenely. "You should have questioned, Fein. That is what intelligent people do. They don't throw their religion away. They don't turn into the sick people who first shook their faith."

"I'm not sick!" Allen yells. "And I didn't throw anything away! You want truth and justice and for everything to fit in its place. But some things are in between, Rabbi. They are not right or wrong. Only natural."

"Who's saying different? There are many ugly vices in the world." Mann rubs his palms along his thighs. "Did I need to come here for you to admit this to yourself? To learn you abandoned God because the world is not the way you wanted it to be?"

"That's not what I said."

Rabbi Mann exhales. "Then what did you say?"

"That I left religion because of people like you."

"Me," Mann says, voice booming. "Me?" Then, controlling himself, "If that's what you want to tell yourself, then that's what I wanted to know."

The partition moves down easily, as if oiled. Allen, with two tokens left, grabs at the door and is sliding the bolt open when he understands one thing. The partition will rise up twice more. Where the rabbis are involved, there is always a path to be followed. Either you stay on it or you stray into darkness: this is the choice that they offer. And, much as Allen feels bitter and lied to for all these years, he half wishes he could live in their realm: where a man is religious or he is not; a good husband or bad. A place where the scales of justice always dip to one side and where the rabbis know what to do with Simcha Wernik, a clean man with a dirty magazine.

Running his thumb along the face of a token, Allen bolts the door again. He will face his teachers—he will not run or hide, only to find himself haunted. He does not want to suffer the rabbis when he pulls the car into the garage or discover them in the basement every time a fuse blows. Allen checks his watch. There is time enough to spend his tokens and reach the bus. And maybe it will be the girls again. Maybe Mann is gone. He said he'd found what he wanted to know.

STEELING himself, Allen drops in a token. As the partition goes up and he sees the round leg of a woman, an older woman, he is overjoyed—as simple as that. It's over. When Allen realizes that this woman is his mother, he knows that he is wrong. Claire sits next to her, in a pair of panties, only the sides visible because of her gigantic pregnant belly. Many of the partitions are open, and Allen can see the men, their arms moving, their expressions wide-eyed, as if hypnotized. One man is wearing a yarmulke. It's Benji Wernik, grandson of the Galitzia Rebbe.

Allen's mother is wearing stockings and garters. In the place where other such women keep tips, she has a wad of Kleenex.

"Do you need some tissue, Ari? Did you remember to bring?" She gets up to hand him some.

"Sit," he says. "Mother, sit down!"

"What, and let you spoil a fancy hanky? Let alone an expensive suit."

"Mother, please, what are you saying?"

"I'm saying that I washed your underwear every day and know from such things." Allen's mother, who hates the very idea of his Gentile wife, who declared her invisible on the day of the wedding, actually leans toward Claire and touches her hand. "He wants to know of what I speak," his mother says. "Underwear stiffer than starched, I scrubbed. Underwear that would shatter if you dropped them to the floor. I tell you, if the Russians had dropped a nuclear bomb when I was in that basement I would have been safe surrounded by his dirty *gatkes*."

"You knew?"

"Of course, I'm a mother. What, you are the first in the world to do such a thing?"

"It's normal. The doctor says so. The rabbi didn't even dispute—and he knows it's a grave sin." Fein is backpedalling, explaining it all away.

"Who said it wasn't normal?" His mother speaks to his wife.

Claire shrugs and spreads her legs, giving Benji Wernik a better view.

"All I'm saying," his mother says, tucking the tissues back into place, "is to have some sense about it. Why ruin a good suit? Why ruin a good marriage—" And then she pauses.

Claire turns, waits. Allen waits even as he prays for the partition to drop. They all wait for his mother to finish the sentence: "Why ruin a good marriage, even if it's to her?" But she doesn't. Claire smiles and moves her hand, placing it on top of her mother-in-law's. She squeezes it and says, "So true."

Allen stands openmouthed. It's a concession from his wife, an act of betrayal by his mother. She has never before acknowledged anything that was not as she pleased.

"Is this what the rabbi means?" he asks them. "Is this how people learn to deal?"

But there is no time for an answer. The fourth dollar is spent and the window comes down.

ALLEN holds the last token lightly. How good it will feel to let it drop. He is actually eager to find the rabbi and Dr. Springmire waiting for him, eager to show them both that he is resigned to coping in a situation from which he gladly would have run. He wants to turn out his pockets, to hold up for them his empty hands. Allen presses the last token into the slot.

But the window opens onto an empty chair. The three others are filled with the women who were there when Allen arrived; only his beauty has gone. The second lady addresses him, her accent strong, a native of the Bronx.

"You're up," she says and pats the empty chair.

Allen is already taking off his jacket and undoing his shoes. He uses one shoe to kick off the other, maybe for the first time since he was a boy in black Shabbos loafers, his father yelling at him not to break the backs.

When Allen is naked except for his watch, he reaches down and finds a handle on the wall in front of him. He takes hold of it, as if he had always known it was there, and opens his section of wall; the hinges, he assumes, are hidden on the other side.

Allen Fein steps up onto the stage and sits in the empty chair.

He is embarrassed, most especially because his erection persists. He covers it for a moment and then drops his hands.

When Allen hears the partition behind him open, he hopes that it's Claire. He does not want to be touched by his mother or by Rabbi Mann. He turns around gracefully and finds the Latino man wearing the familiar tie. This he can handle, in this way he can bend.

"Touch?" Allen says.

The Latino man does not answer, but Allen understands the man's wishes; he is surprised by his own sensitivity in knowing, an art of sorts.

Standing up, Allen walks toward the man. He moves slowly and with an air of detachment. Just the right amount, he feels, befitting an object of desire. ♦

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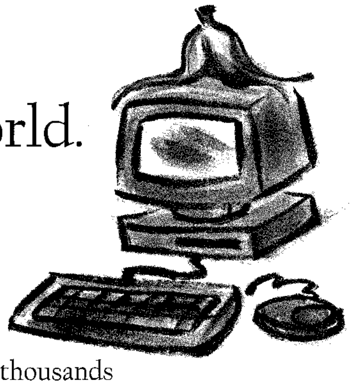

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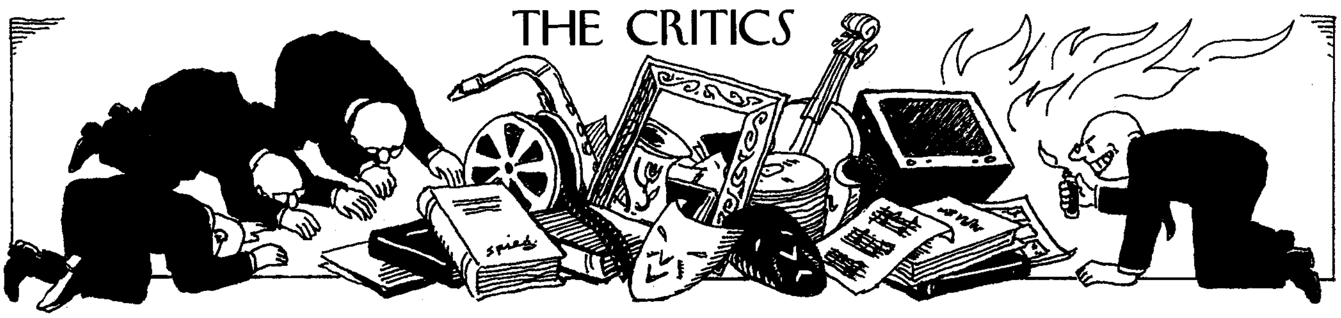


THE CURRENT CINEMA

LAST WALTZ

Kubrick's dark orgy, and "The Blair Witch Project."

BY DAVID DENBY

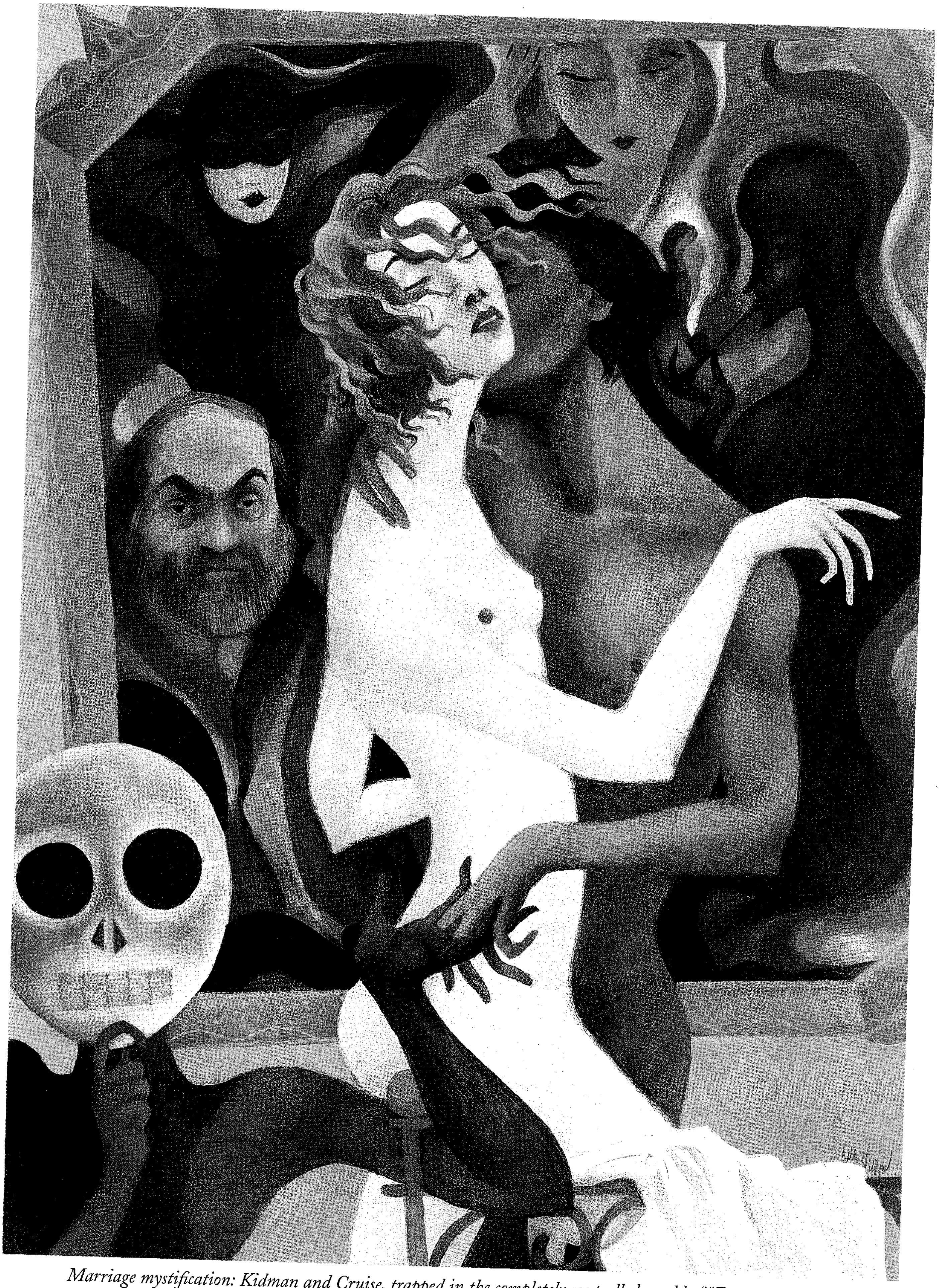
THIS is perhaps not quite the epitaph that he would have wished—nor is it the one that I would have wished to write—but I can state unequivocally that the late Stanley Kubrick, in his final film, "Eyes Wide Shut," has staged the most pompous orgy in the history of the movies. Perhaps the most pompous in the history of real-life orgies, too—though, not having been to one in two or three weeks, I'm a little less sure of my ground there. The orgy is set in a Gothic-style mansion on Long Island, a gruesome crypt of endless corridors and vast rooms with overhanging balconies. A pipe organ, accompanied by weird chanting, gives off a prolonged, solemn wail; a man in cardinal's robes pounds a stick on the floor, just like the manager of a French theatre at the beginning of a play. Men in black cloaks and grotesque masks stand silently next to tall women with long legs, full buttocks, and perfect round breasts; the women wear masks, too, but they are naked except for G-strings and high heels. We seem to be at a cocktail party arranged for fashion models by impotent editors. Did they all show up to enjoy the chanting and organ music? No, fornication ensues, though in the American version of "Eyes Wide Shut" your view of the action will be blocked by digitalized figures that have been added to secure an R rather than an NC-17 rating for the movie. Even, however, if you let your imagination run wild, the atmosphere—sombre, trancelike, unimpassioned—should hold you in check. The orgy is frozen in ritual, and devoted not to pleasure but to authority and fear. It's a stately Stanley orgy—an analogue of the perversely unemotional aristocratic goings on in Kubrick's beautifully photographed, alienated spectacle "Barry Lyndon," from 1975.

Tom Cruise attends the event. He plays Bill Harford, some sort of Manhattan doctor who caters to the rich, and he's drawn to the mansion at the end of a long night of wandering through New York—a journey that was set off when his wife, Alice (Nicole Kidman), confessed to her sexual interest in a naval officer she had spotted the previous summer during a vacation with Bill. Nothing happened but an exchange of glances, yet Kidman, who has a small, libidinous mouth, a long waist, and alabaster flesh (she's a paler version of the anonymous women at the orgy), recites it to Cruise with antagonistic relish, and the nasty feeling behind her story is the most vivid emotion in the movie. Why is she nasty? Because she wants to make Bill jealous. Still, as Bill broods on the confession, and replays, in his head, the image of the naval officer and Alice making love, we may wonder whether Kubrick and his co-scenarist, Frederic Raphael, were right to make her story the mainspring of the entire film. Is Alice's expression of desire enough to send a contemporary marriage spinning out of control?

"Eyes Wide Shut" is based on a superb Arthur Schnitzler work from 1926, "Traumnovelle," which has been translated in different American editions as "Rhapsody" and "Dream Story." Writing in Vienna in the mid-twenties, Schnitzler may have sensed that his material, in terms of consciousness of sex, was already dated, so he set the book earlier, before the First World War, at the time of horse-drawn carriages and proper, repressed bourgeois couples—and also at the time of Freud's revolutionary early writings about dreams and desire, and the emergence of a new, "decadent" style of Viennese painting (Klimt and Schiele), in which women's erotic appetites were represented as enthrallingly dangerous. In Schnitzler's tale, the wife's recitation reveals the drives churning beneath the surface of the marriage, and it smashes the couple's bourgeois complacency. Disturbed and aroused, the husband enters an ambiguously eroticized dream landscape—strange women approach him, perverse things happen, and he perilously faces liberation and destruction at the same time.

The movie follows the same scheme, but when the plot events get pulled out of Schnitzler's fantasia of prewar Vienna they lose their emotional and erotic meaning. Would a husband be quite so unhinged in 1999, a time when conscious sexual fantasy is omnipresent, filling half the magazines on the newsstand? Cruise's Bill Harford wanders around New York in a daze, unsure of what he wants. Is it revenge on his wife? We can't tell. Are we supposed to root for him to get laid? Or hope that he will behave himself and go home? Kubrick and Raphael haven't developed the relationship between this couple well

ANA JUAN



Marriage mystification: Kidman and Cruise, trapped in the completely controlled world of "Eyes Wide Shut."

enough for us to see what's at stake. And they've neutered the emotions that might have pulled the movie together. Bill is so nonplussed by the sexually aggressive women he encounters that he seems like a prig, and, when he neither walks away nor participates, he turns into a mere confused voyeur. He's a protagonist without a purpose, wandering through an indistinct Kubrickian landscape in which everything seems wrong. Would a wealthy young doctor make house calls—in New York, in the nineties? Bill and Alice go to a party at a Manhattan house so vast that the affair seems like a reception at an embassy. Or is the setting meant to suggest a public building in late-imperial Vienna, Schnitzler's period? The New York streets at night are bizarrely devoid of life; a prostitute who picks up Bill and takes him home is patently too beautiful and well educated to be working the pavements. And so on: Stanley Kubrick, having lived in the English countryside for years, produces expository details that fail to connect to American life as anyone lives it, so when the movie becomes intentionally dreamlike we experience no special violation of the normal—the normal is vaguely and dispiritedly "off" from the beginning. "Eyes Wide Shut" never gets a firm purchase on dream *or* reality.

In Schnitzler's novel, the orgy is a shadowy affair, and we take it as a projection of the husband's desires and fears. When one of the masked naked women tells him that he is in danger, she could be a portent from his unconscious—a warning, perhaps, that he could destroy his marriage. But in the movie the woman who offers warnings is presented as an actual person, who had earlier shown up, naked again, at the party attended by Bill and Alice; she has a marginal relation to Bill, but we never figure out why she warns him at the orgy and even (apparently) sacrifices her life to get him to leave. By replacing a figure out of the unconscious with a literal woman, Kubrick and Raphael stupidly create a mystery that they are forced to explain. And the explanation is hapless: the woman vanishes, and the filmmakers' sudden disposal of her seems contemptuous, as if they cared for this anonymous naked beauty no more than did the masked and robed male figures. Who are the members of this dim hellfire club, anyway? Bill is told that if he only knew who was behind the masks he would lose sleep. Apparently, the Joint Chiefs of Staff have been frolicking in Long Island mansions. Really, Kubrick and Raphael should have been ashamed to engage in this kind of portentous mystification, though I suppose we can be grateful that the movie reveals at last Kubrick's secret desire—to preside over arcane, cruel rituals at Versailles.

No doubt some will say that all this confusion—the mixture of unconscious and literal, of American and European—is part of a plan, one element of a completely controlled style. After all, Kubrick's signature is visible in every shot. The camera glides smoothly from room to room; the colors are Kubrick's beloved amber and ochre; and the scenes play, as they often do in his late work, deliberately, very deliberately, not just in ambiguous moments but when characters are doing the most ordinary things, like dressing for dinner. The movie, filled with suggestive dead air, couldn't be further from the rushed, jangled commercial products of the summer season. But "Eyes Wide Shut" doesn't have the coherence or power of art, either, and I found myself bored, and more than eager for a director with a feeling for the lyricism of obsession—Bergman, say—to come in and take over. The actors may have needed a different director, too. Kidman has a few charged, provocative moments, but she drops out of the long middle of the movie, and her on-screen sex with her husband—the big selling point we've been hearing about for the last two years—consists of little more than a few naked embraces. As for Tom Cruise, he meets a strange fate in "Eyes Wide Shut." In "Jerry Maguire," as a hyperactive sports agent, Cruise created a whole new physical language for himself. He was free and easy, and flew through his scenes, delivering on the promise of his wild dance in "Risky Business" (1983). But Kubrick has imprisoned him in the role of a bourgeois stiff, and mostly Cruise furrows his brow and rolls his eyes. Now that he's in a sex movie again, he winds up using his body less than he ever has before.

THE news of the season turns out to be not "Eyes Wide Shut" but "The Blair Witch Project," a scrappy little winner that was made, as a publicist informed me, "for less than your mortgage." Here is the premise: In 1994, three student filmmakers, led by a will-driven young woman named Heather Donahue, go deep into the Maryland woods, seeking the spot where, according to legend, a predatory witch has held sway for something like two hundred years. Heather, who combines skepticism and credulity, flatters the expertise and hauling power of the two young men she gets to go with her, but, in a development that any ex-film student will recognize, the good will of an unpaid film project quickly dissolves into rancor. Out in the woods, Heather becomes something of a witch herself. Determined to make her film, she insists on keeping the cameras and recording equipment on, even as the three get lost, and even as the kind of strange things happen that would cause any sane person to shut off the equipment and flee. What we see is presented to us as the remnants of the project after the three have disappeared. The footage has the haphazard continuity of tormented fragments. It is all handheld stuff, caught on the run. Woods, tents, isolation, increasing fear, and then, in a series of flashes and dizzying pans, ambiguous terrors suggested by commonplace materials: some sticks tied together in a patterned way and hanging in a tree; piles of rocks mysteriously deposited outside the tent. We see nothing supernatural, nothing that could not have been the work of some very malicious people intent on foiling a student film project.

"The Blair Witch Project" is the creation of persons who will doubtless be known in movie history as "the five guys from Orlando"—young film nuts, led by Eduardo Sanchez, Dan Myrick, and Gregg Hale, who have crafted the "remnants" with skill and cunning. For, of course, the film project is a fiction; the entire movie, with its documentary apparatus, its witch mythology, and so on, is fiction. The Orlando Five are deep into cultishness—they've devised a movie that will play at midnight on every campus in the country—but their picture delivers rich, pleasurable doses of fear in a way that even the cleverest horror movies do not. As much as the pathetic film crew, the audience is invaded by terror of the unknown, and the lunging technique only increases our dread of what lies just beyond the camera's ability to record. What's *out* there? "The Blair Witch Project" is a rough masterpiece of suggestion, and it touches on something serious—filmmaking as passion, filmmaking as obsession unto death. It's a drive that Stanley Kubrick would have understood better than anyone. ♦

BOOKS

BETTER THAN TV

Why anchormen keep writing.

BY ANDREW FERGUSON

IF you think about it, the publication of "Deadlines and Datelines" (Morrow; $23), a book of essays by Dan Rather, was probably inevitable. The last year or so has already seen the publication of "The Greatest Generation," by Tom Brokaw, and "The Century," by Peter Jennings and a co-writer, Todd Brewster. These two anchorman histories have much in common. Consumers, taking a break from their TV time, bought both by the job lot. Both carry photographs of their authors in shirtsleeves, looking unusually thoughtful; both were spun off from network television shows; both were collaborative efforts, as the efforts of our anchors tend to be. And both, it's safe to say, must have excited in Dan Rather something approaching author envy. One can easily imagine him on a Sunday morning, with the *Times* best-seller list in a wad at his feet, busily working the phones to his raft of agents and reps, wondering why the hell he doesn't have a new book of his own. And here it is.

Dan Rather

The Rather œuvre is already promiscuously large. Under his brand name there have been, by my count, three volumes of memoirs—two written with Mickey Herskowitz, and the third with Peter Wyden. There was also an early book about the Nixon Presidency (with Gary Paul Gates). More recently, in 1995, Scribner credited Rather with boiling down to a single volume "Our Times," Mark Sullivan's once-famous six-volume history of the early twentieth century. A friend, Rather says, had described Sullivan as "the Dan Rather of his day," which seems a little harsh but which nevertheless led the anchor to participate in the project—with the assistance of Steven Biel.

Having thus conquered the field of history years before either Brokaw or Jennings ever thought of turning his attention to that broad subject, Rather now confronts the baggiest of literary forms, the personal essay. "Deadlines and Datelines" is a collection of articles culled from Rather's newspaper columns and radio commentaries, and large stretches of the book seem to have been written by its author. In his acknowledgments, Rather even goes so far as to identify the essays he didn't write

BRIEFLY NOTED

THE WONDERS OF THE INVISIBLE WORLD, by David Gates (Knopf; $23). The characters in these stories are cynical and civilized and helplessly caught in their ways. A man won't get rid of his dead mother's wheelchair; an assistant dean hopes his young lover, a former student, will have an abortion; a gay man looks after his sister's son while she's in rehab. Because their world is without grace, these men and women use urbanity and taste—in books, in jazz, in people—to stave off despair; it rarely works, but Gates's writing, with its quick intelligence, makes us understand the temptation.

FROM THE BLACK HILLS, by Judy Troy (Random House; $23.95). Seemingly out of the blue, Glenn Newlin, an unassuming sad sack, shoots his receptionist at a local motel. In her third novel, Troy focusses on Glenn's teen-age son, Mike, whose life is suddenly in ruins. With his needy girlfriend, his motorcycle, and his sweaty crush on his boss's wife, Mike is just too ordinary to sustain much interest; instead, it's the author's nuanced, albeit sketchy, portraits of the adults involved—especially Mike's taut, fragile mother—that compel attention.

GEORGE ELIOT: THE LAST VICTORIAN, by Kathryn Hughes (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $30). Eliot learned early to set her arresting portraits within a broad and ironic perspective. But privately she could never scale her beliefs to the proportions of propriety. In this shrewd work, Hughes takes the long view, illuminating the way that Eliot's often painful choices changed other people's minds. The intellectual and emotional events that seared her life are all here—her loss of faith, her family's fury, her unconsecrated union with a married man, her tragic second marriage. But Hughes's book reminds us that the woman shunned by most of social England was also the novelist readers turned to for advice on "how they should live."

UNCOMMON GROUNDS, by Mark Pendergrast (Basic; $27.50). Few coffee drinkers suspect that they are affecting American foreign policy, the domestic policies of Latin-American and African countries, and the habitat of migratory birds. Pendergrast shows how and why they are. He has taken on a huge subject, but he organizes the facts skillfully and puts personalities in the perspective of their times. This encyclopedic volume is the entertaining result.

SAINT AUGUSTINE, by Garry Wills (Viking; $19.95). Wills begins his slim biography of Saint Augustine (354-430) by addressing centuries of misconceptions. Though his admiration for the saint is occasionally tainted by defensiveness, his account of Augustine's search for a faith and a philosophy engages our sympathy. He also conveys the turbulence of the era, when the Roman Empire was beleaguered by barbarians and the Catholic Church by heretics, and shows how Augustine's responses to the troubles of his time have shaped Christianity down to our own.

and to name the CBS staff writers who did. It's a disarming trick, writing a book of essays which includes essays that you insist you didn't write. Still, the residual benefit is undeniable: it leaves the reader with no choice but to assume that everything else is the work of the man whose name is on the cover. Which means that here we are exposed to the soul of an anchorman—to the turn of his mind and the play of his thoughts as they are caught in the light of passing events.

"Deadlines and Datelines" is a brief two hundred and nine pages—not counting introduction, index, and acknowledgments that thank no fewer than a hundred and four friends, colleagues, and factotums. The essays are grouped by subject: "In the News, Across America," "The Washington Scene," "Tributes," and so on. No essay is longer than a thousand words—indeed, few of the paragraphs are longer than two or three sentences. The brief paragraph is a newspaper convention, making copy easier to cut and easier to rearrange. Tiny paragraphs also encourage the formulation of tiny thoughts, and they free the writer from the burden of developing ideas in a sequential order. In a rumination on the movie "Beauty and the Beast" (Disney's, not Cocteau's) Rather writes:

> But I do enjoy movies (J.F.K. included), and like anybody else who plunks down his money for a ticket and a tub of popcorn, I've got my opinions and my interpretations.
>
> Opinions: I like Kathleen Turner and I think Sissy Spacek is one of Texas's most valuable exports.
>
> Interpretations: the news colors every picture ever made in Hollywood. You know that already.

"Ever since early childhood, I always wanted to be a newspaper reporter," Rather tells us. In fact, he still refers to himself in the third person, as "this reporter" or "your reporter." He specializes in what the trade calls "beat-sweeteners": puff pieces that flatter powerful people in the hope that they may someday reciprocate as sources of inside dope. On Madeleine Albright: "She got to be secretary of state the old-fashioned way: she earned it.... For this role, she seems to be the right woman in the right job at the right time." On Bill Richardson: " 'Wild Bill,' even some of his friends call him. But nobody calls him dumb. He's a rising star on the world scene." From Mickey Kantor ("Brilliant, steady, a rock") to John McCain ("Such a man does not give up. Never"), reading a series of these pieces is like trying to wade through a pool of corn syrup.

"I try to avoid mere commentary," Rather writes, "and to offer solid reporting instead." The informational value of his reportorial pieces, however, is nugatory, since they generally consist of a quick simplification of whatever happened to be in the newspapers that morning—much like the evening news on TV. Occasionally he does venture an opinion: "I am—let's be honest—biased in favor of the men and women who served in Vietnam." Sue him if you want. He favors public libraries, too, and space exploration, and music education in grade schools. He thinks—again, let the chips fall where they may—that greed is hurting baseball. He is against gridlock on Capitol Hill, neo-Nazism, and prurience in journalism. His humorous essays aren't as funny as Andy Rooney's, if you can imagine.

The book stands as a landmark nonetheless. Like Brokaw's and Jennings's books, "Deadlines and Datelines" is an artifact of the celebrityhood of American anchors. The strangest component of that celebrity has been the insistence, by the anchors themselves and by their courtiers, that we take them seriously as personages. This is bogus and maddening, but consider the alternative. Rather is the oldest of the Big Three anchors, and his book distills in purer form than theirs what it is that will pass when he and his colleagues retire. "Writing has never come easily to me," he writes, "but I've always loved it. And I've spent a lifetime trying to make of myself a better writer.... Broadcasting still feels ephemeral to me.... What I write is tangible. That alone makes it seem more real, more permanent."

THERE'S a poignancy to this conceit, and to the ambition it expresses. The armies of pretty men and women who dazzle you as you surf through MSNBC and Fox News and the other cable stations are picture people whose ambitions seem not to extend beyond fame and wealth and an overlit life in front of the camera. But "Deadlines and Datelines" testifies that its author, perhaps the preëminent picture person in America, wants something more: he wants to be thought a word person. Making more money in a month than the combined annual payroll of a provincial newspaper, possessing fame beyond the reach of all but the most successful movie stars, Dan Rather is still insecure, still aware that what he does isn't quite real. "This reporter" may no longer be a reporter—not really—and he certainly isn't an essayist. But there is in his ambition a peculiar kind of integrity—the integrity of an anachronism—and, believe it or not, we will miss him when he's gone. ♦

DANCING

LOST AND FOUND

The Kirov looks forward by looking back.

BY JOAN ACOCELLA

"THE SLEEPING BEAUTY," the featured item of the Kirov Ballet's recent season at the Metropolitan Opera House, was given its première by St. Petersburg's Imperial Ballet in 1890, at the start of a decade in which Russian art was to be torn between two bitterly opposed factions. On one side stood the defenders of the proto-Soviet program (realism, nationalism, topicality) that had held sway since the eighteen-sixties. On the other side were the Westernizers, calling for Russian art to open itself to Europe and to history and above all to the classical style that seemed embodied by St. Petersburg itself. "The Sleeping Beauty" was of the latter camp. Its choreographer, Marius Petipa, was a Frenchman. Its composer, Tchaikovsky, was considered Europeanized (and had been spat upon as such by nationalist critics). Its librettist, Ivan Vsevolojsky, the director of the Imperial Theatres, was an ardent Francophile. He chose the ballet's French source, Perrault's fairy tale, and he instructed Tchaikovsky to write the music in the style of Lully, court composer to Louis XIV. The whole ballet was a tribute to the Sun King—that's who the monarch in the last act represented—and to his divine counterpart, Apollo. The ballet's final backdrop showed the Sun God, with his steeds, charging through the heavens.

Europe, history, Louis, Apollo: "The Sleeping Beauty" is a tightly packed metaphor. And beneath these images lies one more, ballet. In the idea that the body—source of our ills, our death—can be rationalized, made fleet and harmonious, and charged with high meaning, we read classicism's basic credo, that what is natural is beautiful, and hence that the world is good. However long the night, the sun (Apollo) will rise again. The princess who is the heroine of "The Sleeping Beauty" is named Aurora, or sunrise, and she cannot be stopped. The wicked fairy Carabosse can put her to sleep for a hundred years but cannot make her die. Furthermore, the only reason Carabosse casts the spell is that the court forgot to invite her to Aurora's christening. At the end of the ballet, she is a guest at Aurora's wedding. This is a decidedly non-Manichaean universe. Evil doesn't really mean to be evil; it just loses its temper now and then.

"The Sleeping Beauty" was the most influential ballet ever created. Alexandre Benois, a leader of the Westernizers, said that if it had not been for "Beauty," and the passion for ballet that it inspired in him and his friends, notably Serge Diaghilev, there would have been no Ballets Russes—in which case there would have been no modern ballet to speak of in Europe or America. But "Beauty" was more than a popularizer; it became a talisman. In later years, when people wanted to banish bad times, they tended to put on "The Sleeping Beauty." Such was the case with the Ballets Russes' 1921 production. In a world exhausted by war, frightened by revolution, and bewildered by competing modernisms, Diaghilev called up "The Sleeping Beauty." The same was true of the famous 1946 Sadler's Wells production. When Margot Fonteyn, as Aurora, smiled down from the height of her perfect arabesque, Londoners could say to themselves that, yes, they had survived the war.

A less chronicled but equally important "Beauty" revival was the one mounted in St. Petersburg, or Petrograd, in 1922, by Fyodor Lopukhov, the recently installed director of what was left of the Imperial Ballet. Imagine Lopukhov's position. The civil war was barely over. The company was painfully reduced. (Those who could flee to the West had done so.) There was no money, and little support for classical ballet. Indeed, many leaders of the new U.S.S.R. believed that ballet should simply be eliminated, as a bad influence. Under these conditions Lopukhov mounted not just a revival of "The Sleeping Beauty" but a reconstruction of its 1890 text, which had been eroded over the years. Lopukhov intended his production as a model. To him, Petipa-style classicism was compatible with revolution; both were utopian. According to George Balanchine, who was one of his young dancers, Lopukhov used to say to the company, "Forward, to Petipa!"

Stalin saw things differently, and by 1930 Lopukhov had been removed from his post. The company retained the nineteenth-century ballets—in maimed versions, with plot elements removed or Sovietized—but it did not build on them. Young choreographers devoted their energies not to classicism but to a new, Stalinist genre known as *drambalet*, in which dance was basically a vehicle for political narrative. In the meantime, however, Balanchine, aged twenty, had escaped from the Soviet Union and joined Diaghilev's Ballets Russes. As a child, he had danced in "The Sleeping Beauty," and it was that fantastical experience—to be onstage with the wicked fairy, "black and shiny" (his words), vanishing in a ring of fire—which persuaded him not to run away from ballet school. Later, he danced in Lopukhov's production. And if Lopukhov's dream of a modernist classicism was scrapped in the Soviet Union, it

Svetlana Zakharova as Princess Aurora in "The Sleeping Beauty," the most influential ballet ever created and a metaphor for the art itself.

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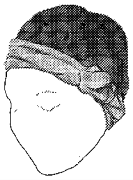


came true in the West, in the works that Balanchine created for the Diaghilev troupe, especially in the 1928 "Apollo," which is a sort of précis of "The Sleeping Beauty." Same god: Apollo. Same story: a young person grows up. Same understory: the marriage of flesh and rule, classical ballet. "Apollo" was the twentieth-century child of the nineteenth-century "Beauty."

That is the background to the season that the Kirov, former home of Petipa, Lopukhov, and Balanchine, presented at the Met. One program consisted of a 1934 *drambalet*, Rotislav Zakharov's "The Fountain of Bakhchisaray," which looked as corny as most other official art of the Soviet thirties. There was also an electrifying "Giselle." But the crucial programs were the first—a reconstruction, via notation, of "The Sleeping Beauty" as it looked at the turn of the century—and the last, a suite of Balanchine ballets, including "Apollo."

The Kirov's current situation is not unlike Lopukhov's in 1922. Needless to say, there has been a change of government. Money is scarce, and so are senior dancers. (As before, many have gone west.) Above all, the company has suffered a loss of faith in its tradition. *Drambalet* is now widely ridiculed in Russia. Where should the Kirov directors turn? On the evidence of the Met season, they are doing what Lopukhov did, casting forward by casting backward, with this reconstructed "Beauty." Actually, much of what was reconstructed—particularly in the Prologue, where the fairies bring their gifts to the infant princess—has already been seen in Western productions, because those productions were mounted from the same notation that the Kirov, after its long isolation, has now discovered. (It was sitting in the Harvard Theatre Collection.) The importance of the production, then, is symbolic. It is perestroika on point. By reaching back to Petipa's text, the Kirov is reaching out to the West, to classicism, to the past, and to the future that it did not have—notably, Balanchine.

The last element is the key. In the late fifties and early sixties, thanks to tours of the Paris Opera Ballet and New York City Ballet, Russian audiences were finally exposed to Balanchine's mature work. In a recent issue of *Ballet Review*, Gabriela Komleva, a leading Kirov ballerina of the sixties, describes how she felt, in 1962, upon seeing Balanchine's "Symphony in C." It was a moment of "absolute happiness," she recalls, but also eerie, like a dream "where you end up in a strange place, but with a vague sense of unease—that you've already been there, that you belong there." What she is saying is "This should have been ours."

The Kirov administrators clearly agree. For more than a decade, they have been hiring New York City Ballet veterans to teach them Balanchine's repertory. By now, they have learned six of his ballets, and at the Met they showed us four: "Serenade," "Apollo," "Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux," and "Symphony in C." How did those pieces look, translated onto bodies that for many years have been doing something else altogether? Rather odd, sometimes. Balanchine loved speed; the Kirov dancers have to struggle to keep up. Balanchine wanted dancing on the beat; the Kirov dancers tend to dance in front of the beat. Balanchine wanted no acting; the Kirov dancers like to act, often broadly. The otherwise superb young Svetlana Zakharova, as Terpsichore, in "Apollo," made googly eyes at the god throughout her variation. And this is not to speak of general technical problems, such as the fact that many of the Kirov women, probably because their legs are so hyperextended, cannot pirouette without tipping over.

On the other hand, the company has things that we lack. Every single Kirov man seems able to execute perfect double air turns. The modelling of the women's arms is a miracle, like some old, exotic art—Kabuki costuming, German porcelain—that we can only gaze on in wonder. And watching the Kirov run to catch up with Balanchine was far more exciting than the glazed renditions ("This old thing?") that we have been getting from New York City Ballet. To see these earnest dancers in "Serenade" trying, on the one hand, to get everything right and, on the other hand, to produce the rush and abandon that this ballet requires was to feel again the kind of tender vulnerability that "Serenade" must have communicated when Balanchine, freshly arrived in America, created it on his ballet students in 1934.

Some of the Kirov's disagreements

with Balanchine can be resolved, but not all of them. If the company decides to go on studying his work, the result will be a hybridization. Out of that may come new work, based on his discoveries. Forward, to Balanchine! Or maybe not. The Met season was tailored to the classically minded New York dance audience; the Kirov left at home many other ballets, including quite a few in the muscle-beach-party tradition—Maurice Béjart, Roland Petit—that was Continental Europe's answer to the Soviet *drambalet*. This tradition must seem very attractive to the Russians, for it offers a liberated subject matter—sex, despair, all the things they couldn't talk about before—at the same time that it allows them to go on performing the fraught gymnastics in which they are so well practiced. In their eyes, Petit and Balanchine may actually look alike, both so wild and new. How strange, to be them right now. How strange, to watch them. ♦

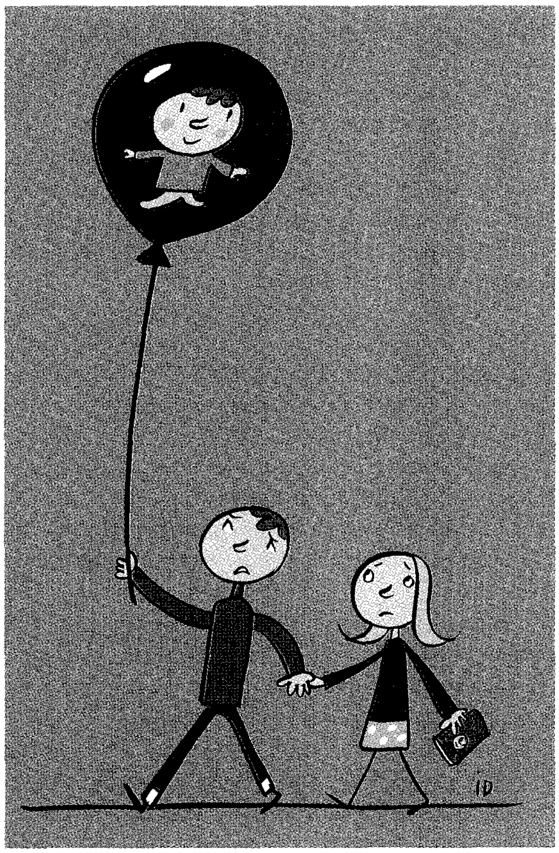
THE WAYWARD PRESS

THE PARENT TRAP

How did they ever raise kids without magazines?

BY HENDRIK HERTZBERG

HERE'S some reassuring news from the home front. According to the June and July issues of *Parents*, Mom really doesn't have anything to worry about as far as the little ones are concerned, except infected pustules caused by wet bathing suits; choking on toys that haven't been size-tested by being slipped through a cardboard toilet-paper tube; school massacres; dehydration; obesity; sunburns that double the risk of skin cancer; sudden-infant-death syndrome; skull fractures; asthma inhalers that stunt growth; lack of fluoride in bottled water; hepatitis A; sprained ankles from platform sneakers; dog bites; biking injuries; Lyme disease; falling out of windows; getting burned by sparklers; getting scalded by spilled spaghetti sauce; drowning (in wading pools, in hot tubs, in swimming pools on account of leaky flotation devices); suffocating in the trunk of a car; and the attentions of pedophiles who are strangers, pedophiles who are relatives, pedophiles who are neighbors, and pedophiles who are school administrators, Scoutmasters, or coaches. (Partial list.) It's always been tough being a parent, and the familiar modern bugaboos—career conflicts, divorce rates, inadequate day care, bad schools, distant grandparents, trashy TV—haven't made it any easier. No big deal, though. With a little common sense and some advice from the folks at the magazine office, all these problems can be taken care of.



Openhearted readers, utterly trusting and vulnerable.

Parents and its many imitators have got the dialectic between fear and hope down to a science. In their pages, the two emotions vibrate together like the tines of a tuning fork, producing a pleasant, even tone. Despite the many dangers to which these magazines draw attention, reading them is a calming experience. Their covers are generally the same: a cute, happy baby or toddler against a white background—no socioeconomic particulars to distract from the generic glow. Their contents are generally the same: cautious, moderate, cheerful guidance on the rearing of small children—most of it recycled, with new details, roughly every eighteen months. Their message is always the same: Not to worry. Sure, there are problems, but you want only the best for your kids. Everything's going to be all right.

The idea that a magazine produced by strangers in a distant city could help people bring up their children arose in the wake of America's definitive emergence as a restless, dynamic industrial power. *Parents*, the originator of the field and still its leader, has been around since 1926. Its founder, a famous man in his time, was George J. Hecht, a sterling example of a type that flourished in the era of Theodore Roosevelt and Jane Addams: a combination of social reformer, salesman, entrepreneur, and high-minded civic leader. Born in 1895 to one of New York's upper-crust German-Jewish families, Hecht went to the Ethical Culture School and to Cornell. During the First World War, he persuaded the government's propaganda apparatus to set up something called the Bureau of Cartoons, with himself at its head, to place canned "editorial" cartoons in local newspapers. After the war, he got the idea for a magazine that would bring the relatively new field of child development to a mass audience. (Part of the financing for the magazine came from a Rockefeller-family foundation.)

The masthead of *Children, the Magazine for Parents*, as it was originally called, looked like a charity letterhead, so heavy was it with the names and titles of prominent educators and pedi-

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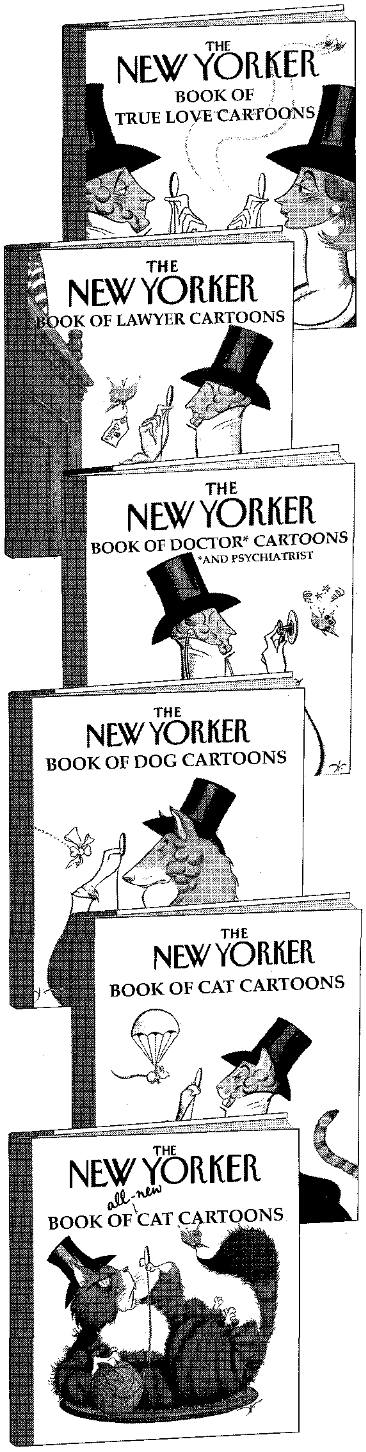
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atricians listed as "advisory editors." Some of these people actually wrote the earnest articles inside—articles designed, as an editor's note in the first issue put it, to help parents cope with such "stern conditions" of child-rearing as "the problem of the baby who refuses milk; the three-year-old who won't eat spinach; the angel-faced child who is given to fibs and rebellion; the daughter in her teens who will hide her youthful bloom under cosmetics; and a son in college who wants his own motor and a raccoon coat in his freshman year in order to hold his own."

Within a year, circulation was fifty thousand, a decade later it was four hundred thousand, and a decade after that it was over a million. *Parents* became the mother hen of a publishing brood that eventually included a dozen or so kids' magazines, such as *Polly Pigtails* and *Humpty Dumpty's*. A large share of the ample profits went into Hecht's charitable work: he helped to found the Greater New York Fund (which later became the United Way of New York City), and advocated child-welfare legislation, federal aid to education, and, especially, family planning. (As a matter of editorial policy, Hecht's *Parents* rarely showed a family with more than two children.) Still, enough cash was left over to make Hecht a rich man, with the means to get richer. In 1963, he bought F. A. O. Schwarz, the posh toy store; he sold it seven years later, having built it into a high-end franchise with sixteen branches. But by 1978—when, two years before he died, Hecht sold his magazine business to Gruner & Jahr, the West German publishing company—*Parents* had become dull, decaying, and stodgy. Only a lack of competition and a bare-bones budget were keeping it profitable.

As Hecht was going out the door at *Parents*, Elizabeth Crow, fresh from an editing job at *New York*, was coming in. When G. & J. picked her to edit *Parents*, Crow was just thirty-one—a few months older than Hecht had been when he started the magazine, and a few months younger than its median reader. She was also a mother. *Parents* prospered under Crow, who oversaw it for fifteen years. As the baby boomers finally got around to having babies of their own, circulation climbed, ultimately to nearly two million. Whole new categories of advertisers—not just baby food and toys but cars, beauty products, and insurance—wanted in on the baby boomlet. So did other publishers. *Child* came along in 1986, *Parenting* (now owned by Time Warner) in 1987, *Family Life* in 1993. There are magazines for African-American parents, Hispanic parents, holistic parents, and parents of twins. There are local freebie magazines by the score—*San Diego Parent, Portland Parent, New Jersey Suburban Parent*, and so on. The field is still growing: *Reader's Digest* has just launched *Your Family*, another *Parents* clone. And why not? These magazines turn out to be powerful tools for consumer advertising. Their readers are overwhelmingly new parents, with very young children. (When adolescent problems began to get knottier than cosmetics and raccoon coats, most magazines dropped their coverage of anything above the puberty line.) These readers are entering a stage of life in which they will be buying a lot more stuff while having a lot less time for comparison shopping. They are by definition receptive; they trustingly put their attention at the disposal of the magazine, in a way that a user of the Internet—where there are many child-rearing sites—does not. (People often go to the Internet, as they go to books, with an agenda: in order to look up something specific.) And, of course, the readers of these magazines are in the openhearted, vulnerable frame of mind that thinking about one's children brings on. No wonder everybody wants a place at the trough.

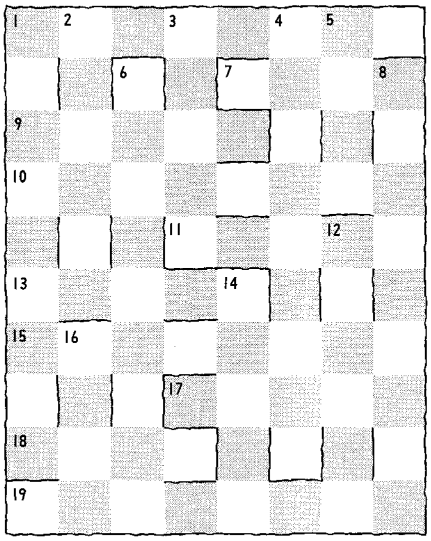
It's tempting to dismiss the parenting magazines as fodder for neurotic, narcissistic yuppies, but that can't be right—unless there is no longer any distinction between yuppiedom and the normal American suburban middle class. *Parents* and the rest are aimed at that middle class (what mass consumer magazine isn't?); more to the point, they are about the life it leads. If fashion magazines, celebrity magazines, beauty magazines, and "shelter books" are picture windows against which readers press their noses in order to catch a glimpse of an unattainable world beyond, then parenting magazines are a mirror on the wall, albeit one with a rosy tint and soft, flattering vanity lights. The nature of their subject keeps these magazines tethered to lived reality in a way that a lot of other kinds of magazines don't have to bother with. Parenting magazines are free of the desperate celebrity worship that covers the faces (and palms) of the rest of the slicks like self-tanning cream. Perhaps a Jennifer Aniston or a Ricky Martin is lurking somewhere in the glossy compost heap next to my desk, but I haven't been able to find one. In fact, the only celebrity pix I've run across in weeks of paging through child-rearing magazines are in *Baby Talk*, a (quite useful and lively) giveaway offshoot of *Parenting*, the Avis to *Parents'* Hertz: in its opening section of miscellaneous short items, *Baby Talk* sometimes runs a small photo-agency shot of a star, next to a quote gleaned from some public source. (" 'I change diapers more than you think, but less than Annette would like.'—Actor Warren Beatty, father of three and husband of actress Annette Bening.") But that's it. In these magazines, celebrity is as rare as irony.

The level of fantasy promulgated by the parenting magazines is only a step or two beyond ordinary reality, not a quantum leap. The people in the photographs are nice-looking, but never impossibly beautiful, thin, or chic. The rooms, yards, and vacation spots where they are photographed are pleasant but modest. And the faces, again, are never famous. It takes only a little imagination to put yourself in the picture—which is exactly where the magazines want you to be.

Parents et al. are in many ways monuments to selfishness, as are all "service" magazines. (Not for nothing does *Self* call itself *Self*.) But the selfishness the parenting magazines appeal to is one order of magnitude less ignoble than the kind you find in the other service magazines, where the emphasis is on Me, full stop. With the parenting magazines, the emphasis is not on Me alone. It's on Me and My Kids. The parenting magazines are on a higher moral plane than the how-to-get-a-guy magazines, just as a man going home to his wife and children (or a woman breast-feeding a baby) is on a higher moral plane than a man out trolling for nookie (or a woman flexing her Kegels in preparation for a date). It must be noted, however, that it's hard to be the first without having been the second. Elizabeth Crow, by the way, is now editor-in-chief of *Mademoiselle*. ♦

8 x 10 CRYPTIC

NO. 97 BY PATRICK BERRY



ACROSS

1 Arm of the Arctic Ocean re-created with ease (5,3)
7 Copper's broadcast on the radio (4)
9 Like warships buried in sudden avalanches (5)
10 Foreign wanderer approached (4,4)
11 Because stuffing is incendiary (5)
13 Sicken pitcher in the middle of pitch (5)
15 Out acquiring cravat for ruby wedding anniversary (8)
17 I repaired torn part of book (5)
18 Need jet after takeoff? (4)
19 Inviting farmer to keep piece of land (8)

DOWN

1 Incredible cuckoo flew round (9)
2 Sweepstakes winner sounds gruff (6)
3 Unbends what's bent (5)
4 Tiger seen wandering African plain (9)
5 New Age musician in African country losing capital (4)
6 Charge too much for plastic cover: $1 per (9)
8 Determine source of restlessness in "The Scream" (6,3)
12 Fruit cup and club sandwiches Tuesday (6)
14 Is located on both sides of northern borders (5)
16 Love partner's birthstone (4)

• •

The solution to puzzle No. 96 appears on page 31. For a free copy of "The New Yorker's Guide to Solving Cryptic Crosswords," please send your fax number or a stamped, self-addressed envelope to "Solvers' Guide," The New Yorker, 20 West 43rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10036. For an electronic version, send an E-mail to puzzleguide@newyorker.com.

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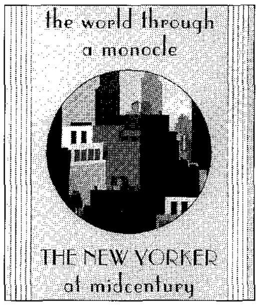

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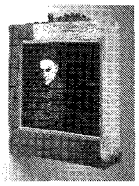

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3 Who was Major Deegan?
4 On what newsstand can you get the *Village Voice* earliest?
5 Why would you want it early?
6 Is the cold water colder in the kitchen or in the bathroom?
7 How did Stanley Steingut break his foot?
8 How many blocks in a Manhattan mile?
9 What song closes out each episode of "The Robin Byrd Show"?
10 What game was played in the Polo Grounds?
11 Where is the best surfing in New York City?
12 Who is Dr. Zizmor?
13 Who was Al Gionfriddo?
14 Where is the Barneys warehouse sale held?
15 For what newspaper did Murray Kempton first write a column?
16 Who played for both the Brooklyn Dodgers and the New York Rangers?
17 What did Vincent Impellitteri do for a living?
18 Name the ethnic group that gave us the words "boss" and "stoop."
19 How many restaurants does Jean-Georges Vongerichten own?
20 What is the difference between a "schlemiel" and a "schlimazel"?
21 Who was Oisk?
22 Who was Skoonj?
23 Who was called the Barber?
24 Who was Mario Procaccino?
25 Where in Brooklyn do you change from the A to the F?
26 When was the Third Avenue El torn down?
27 What is a "kabola"?
28 What vanished newspaper was once edited by Walt Whitman?
29 Where was Al Capone born and when did he follow the advice of Horace Greeley?
30 Who was Horace Greeley?
31 What is B Bar short for?
32 Name and locate the hotel from which Abe (Kid Twist) Reles suffered defenestration.
33 What were Kits?
34 What were "loosies"?
35 Where is the Tombs and how do you get into it?
36 More important, how do you get out of it?
37 Who was Charlie Lucky?
38 What is the most famous dance form created by the Dominicans?
39 What page is Page Six on?
40 Name the avenue in the Bronx that helped supply a name for one of the first New York rock-and-roll groups.
41 Who were the Collyer Brothers?
42 What does CBGB stand for?
43 Why *is* Seventh on Sixth?
44 Name the locations of two saloons run by Toots Shor.
45 What does DUMBO stand for?
46 In what now vanished Greenwich Village institution did Sam Shepard work as a busboy?
47 Where was S. Klein and what was sold there?
48 How many people does it take to violate the city's no-cabaret-license/no-dancing law?
49 What were "skellies"?
50 Where was Tar Beach?
51 On what floor is Moomba's V.I.P. lounge?
52 Name the theatre where Steve Allen hosted the "Tonight Show."
53 What did Paul O'Dwyer's older brother do for a living?
54 Where did Frank Costello have dinner the night he was shot?
55 Who were the Bishops and the Robins?
56 Where was Malcolm X assassinated?
57 How much is the fare on the Staten Island Ferry?

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